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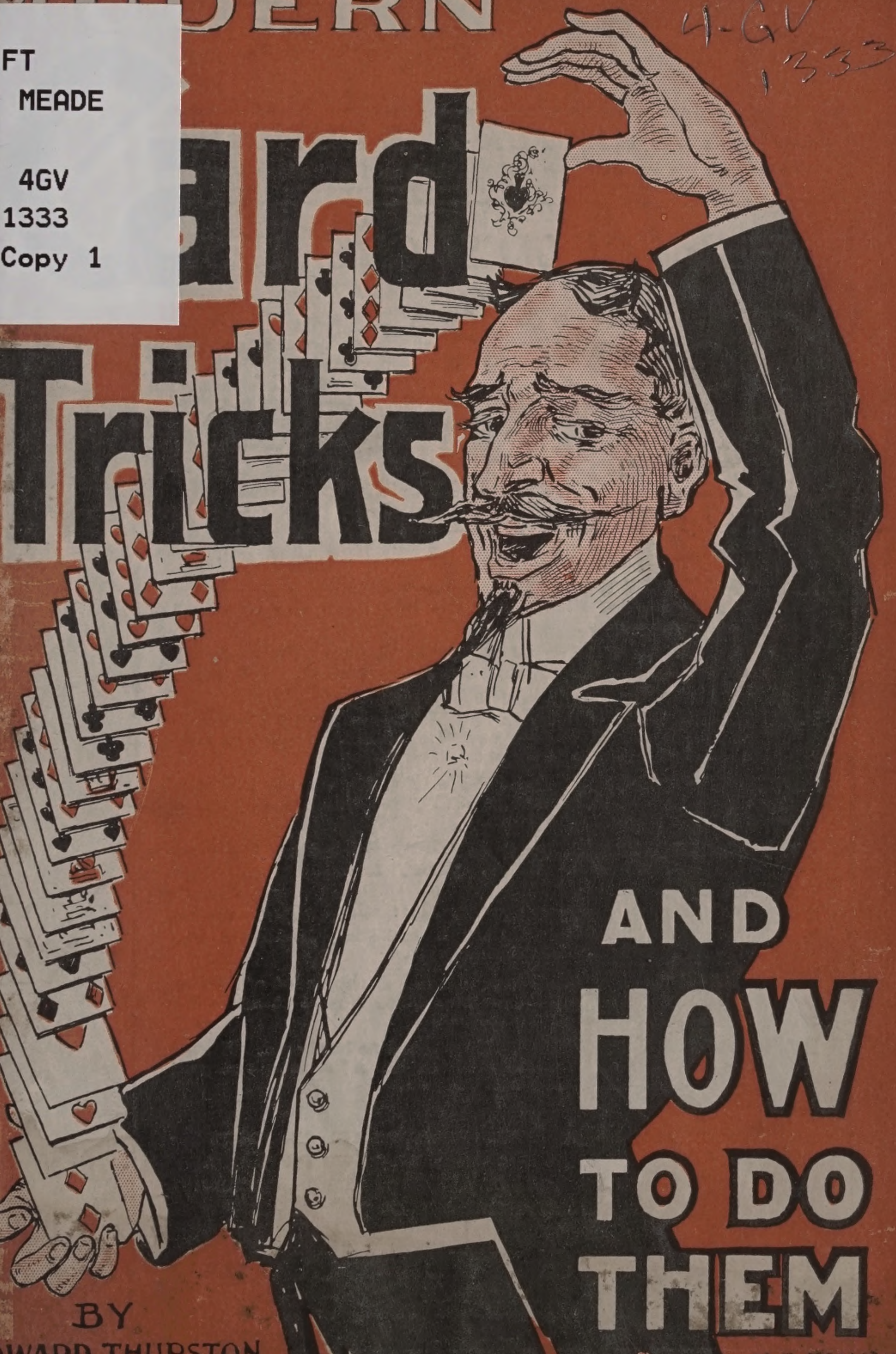

AND HOW TO DO THEM

BY
OWARD THURSTON

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MODERN CARD TRICKS

And how to do them.

CONTAINING
All the Principles of Sleight-of-Hand, with Careful
and Easy Instructions.

By
HOWARD THURSTON
"The Man Who Mystified Hermann."

FULLY ILLUSTRATED

Chicago
M. A. DONOHUE & CO.
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HOWARD THURSTON'S CARD TRICKS

Samuel

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CHAPTER I.

A Few Incidents in the Life of Howard Thurston.

Howard Thurston, the Premier Card Manipulator of the World, and known throughout America as "The Man who Mystified Hermann," was born at Columbus, Ohio, on the 20th of July, 1869, and is therefore now in his thirty-first year.

Originally intended by his father—a gentleman of firm Christian principles—for the ministry, he entered the D. L. Moody College, in Northfield, Mass., and completed a course of five years' training. During this period he came to the conclusion that Providence had never intended him to go through life as a parson, and his natural love of Magic always predominated over his liking for the more serious subject he was studying.

Upon graduating with honors from the College, very much against his father's wish he decided to adopt Magic as his profession. (How many other well-meaning enthusiasts have adopted this procedure, and with what result?) He did so, but found that there were already too many "all-round" Conjurers in the business. This somewhat damped his ardor at first; but, after cogitating for some considerable time, he decided to adopt a single branch of the Magician's Art, viz., Card Tricks.

Then came many weary months of assiduous practice, the greater part of the time being occupied in a strict adherence to a special system of strengthening and giving additional flexibility to the muscles of the hands (a system which, much as I should like, I am not in a position to divulge), and after five years' travelling in America, presenting a Magical Entertainment of two hours in length in the smaller cities, Mr. Thurston first made his bow to a public audience as a Card Manipulator at the Fountain Square Theatre, Cincinnati, Ohio, in January, 1895. Since then his career has been one of unprecedented success and brilliancy.

One of the chief characteristics of Mr. Thurston's act is his graceful stage deportment. No other living artiste, in my opinion (and I have witnessed the performances of the best Prestidigitateurs of the past quarter of a century) can compare with him in the incomparable manner in which he presents his tricks.

There is nothing automatic about this Past Master of the Art. During the whole of his performance he is thinking, and always on the alert, watching for new ideas to occur to his energetic brain. Magic, like Literature is a double Art: Mechanical Magic is the Prose, while Sleight-of-

Hand is the Poetry, and it is in this latter branch that this great artiste excels.

Mr. Thurton's *pièce de résistance* is his celebrated Rising-Card Trick, with which he absolutely mystified that guardian of an honored name in the world of deception—HERMANN THE GREAT.

With regard to this trick I think it will be of interest to the readers of this book, to reproduce at this point the following extract from the *Denver Sunday Post*, of October 23d, 1898:

"HERMANN, THE GREAT, MYSTIFIED BY THURSTON.

"Hermann, the magician, and his entire company, including Mme. Hermann, were nonplussed last night on the Tabor Grand stage by another magician. The scene occurred about 7:30 o'clock, before the prestidigitateur had dressed for his performance, and while Mme. Hermann was yet in street costume. Both had come in with the understanding that they were to witness a performance before commencing their own.

"The chief actor in the scene was Howard Thurston, who has been filling a two weeks' engagement at the Orpheum Theatre.

"Hermann, having heard of Thurston's act, or trick, called at the theatre one evening to witness it, and was so pleased with it that he requested the young man to call. In response, Thurston called on Hermann, and they discussed the act.

Hermann told Thurston that he would be delighted to have him give the trick before his entire company, and, if its members were as favorably impressed with it as he himself, he would purchase it.

"Thurston set last evening as the time of the trial exhibition. The drop curtain was lowered and Thurston told all the company to line up before him on the stage. In the group of auditors, besides Mr. and Mrs. Hermann, were W. E. Robinson, chief illusionist of the company, also a representative of the *Denver Post*, the numerous stage hands and carpenters attached to the company and the theatre.

"Thurston occupied a position in the centre of the stage. Four of the witnesses drew a card from a pack which had been shuffled, looked at it, noted the denomination silently, and replaced it in Thurston's hands. Then he withdrew to a position further in the rear, and asked one of the spectators what card he had taken out of the pack.

"'It was the ten of diamonds,' was the answer.

"'Ten of diamonds, come forth!' commanded Thurston, who held the pack. Instantly the ten of diamonds arose from his left hand and ascended two feet to the right hand. Addressing the next man, he said: 'What card did you draw?'

"'The jack of hearts.'

"Thurston ordered the jack of hearts to ascend, and it instantly obeyed.

"To the next man Thurston propounded a similar question, with like results. He then asked the next man, Hermann himself, to name his card, which happened to be the ten of clubs.

'"Let the ten of clubs appear!' said Thurston, and the familiar ten-spot silently arose as if propelled by an unseen power. Hermann smiled with wonder at the performance, and was completely mystified. Afterward Hermann acknowledged the trick was a winner, and offered to purchase it.

"Thurston was especially gratified at the fact that his trick was not seen through by the Hermann party. He had mystified the mystifier."

When this episode became known, there was a great rush on the part of the public to witness this trick, and since then Mr. Thurston has never passed a single week out of an engagement.

In addition to his being otherwise highly connected socially, Mr. Thurston is the nephew of United States Senator John M. Thurston, of Nebraska.

I include the following opinions of well-known newspapers, taken from a large, well-filled scrap-book now before me, of flattering Press notices, clipped from leading newspapers of the world, as I am of opinion that everything appertaining to Conjuring is of interest to students of books of this description.

San Francisco Examiner, March 27th, 1899.

"Howard Thurston has accomplished the seemingly impossible in presenting a sleight-of-hand performance in a gentlemanly manner. The charm of his act is quite as much in the way he does it as in what he does. Some of his tricks are astounding."

New York World, August 21st, 1890.

"Admirable as is the work of all these, the act of Mr. Thurston provokes the keenest interest, owing to its novelty and to his remarkable expertness.

"As a manipulator of cards, he must be the envy of every slick and smooth card-sharp in the country. He is more adroit in his tricks than Kellar, Hermann, or any of the other great necromancers who have juggled the pasteboards among other feats of legerdemain.

"His tricks are worth studying by all who think they know a thing or two about shuffling cards."

In the United States Mr. Thurston always concluded his entertainment by producing numerous packs of cards from different parts of a spectator's clothing, finishing up by taking a live duck from under the gentleman's coat-collar.

With regard to the duck for this latter trick which Mr. Thurston carried with him in America, his trusted and intelligent colored assistant, Keno, who has been with him for three years, tells rather a humorous story, which, in addition to proving the shrewdness and sharpness of the lad, is distinctly interesting.

In Los Angeles, Cal., where Mr. Thurston was playing, his assistant was boarding with a colored family. One day, when a wedding was about to be celebrated in the house, they told him he had better go out in the yard and look for his duck, as they had missed it, and were afraid it had got away. He did so, but could find no duck. Poor Keno was in a fix; but being aware of a certain weakness for appropriating other people's poultry displayed by some classes of colored folk, he came to the conclusion that Mister Duck was intended to form part of the wedding repast. He thereupon concocted a story to the effect that it did not matter about the duck being lost, as the day previously it had eaten, by accident, at the theatre a large quantity of poison which Mr. Thurston used for cleaning his diamonds, and the doctor had told Mr. Thurston he had better buy another one, as it would certainly die from the effects of the poison within two or three days. Keno then went off to the theatre, and on his return at night was informed that his duck had in some mysterious manner found its way back into the yard, which, upon investigation, he found to be true!

After being the recipient of many flattering proposals to appear in Europe, Mr. Thurston decided to cross the Atlantic, and opened at the Palace Theatre, London, on November 12th, 1900, his success being instantaneous. His original engagement was for four weeks, but he went serenely on his way, the applause increasing at each performance, for twenty-six consecutive weeks at this theatre, which is conceded by all to be the most fashionable and beautiful vaudeville house in Europe.

The following extract from the *London Mail* is of interest, and I include it:

"THE KING OF CARDS.

"At the Palace Theatre there is just now appearing Mr. H. Thurston, who with some justice calls himself the 'King of Cards.' Mr. Thurston has developed quite a new form of card entertainment, one which not only amuses, but absolutely mystifies, the audience. He has brought to a pitch of perfection the art of palming a pack of cards, with results which can be readily imagined by any one acquainted with card tricks. He has wonderful digital strength, and his latest feat of distributing a pack of cards singly throughout the audience quite brings down the house. Not only does he throw single cards into the gallery of what is one of the largest theatres in town, but with such accuracy that he can almost throw to any particular individual in the audience."

His success was all the more gratifying, inasmuch as he was preceded in London by many expert card manipulators.

Being a polished gentleman both on and off the stage, Mr. Thurston made, during his stay in the great Metropolis, a host of friends; but this does not seem at all strange to any one personally acquainted with this genial and affable artiste. In addition to highly salaried engagements booked in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, etc., etc., Mr. Thurston holds contracts which will keep him busy for the next four years. A gentleman and a born artiste to his finger-tips, Howard Thurston—Premier Card Manipulator of the World—will undoubtedly cause his name to be a household word among conjurers for very many years to come.

BERNARD EUSTACE LENNOX.

Piccadilly, London, ***January, 1901.***

CHAPTER II.

Indispensable Sleights.

I AM of course aware that the "pass," "force," and "change" have often been explained in the numerous excellent treatises on Card Tricks in existence, but I feel it my duty to include descriptions of them herein, inasmuch as many of the most brilliant illusions with cards would be impossible but for a thorough knowledge of these. So as not to tax the patience of my readers who are advanced in the Art, I will make my descriptions as terse as possible, first of all explaining what is acknowledged to be the foundation of card manipulation, viz.:

THE PASS.

For the accomplishment of this sleight, the pack is held as in Fig. 1, with the little finger of the left hand inserted over the card to be brought to the top. Now cover the pack with the right hand. Grasp the lower portion of the pack lengthways between the second finger at the upper, and the thumb at the lower end, the left thumb lying

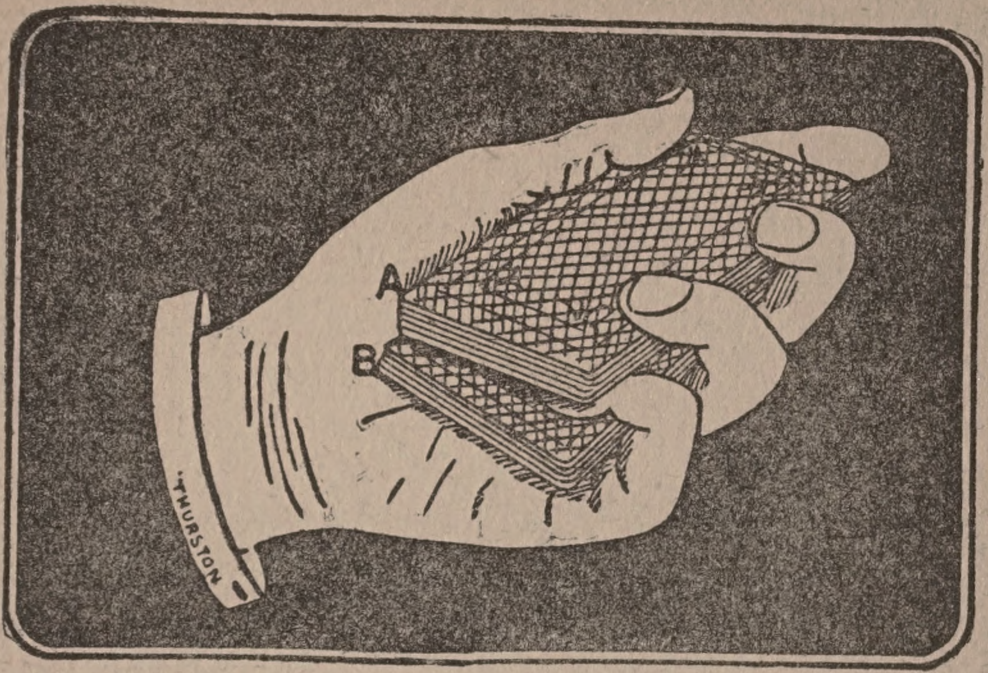


FIG. 1.

slightly bent across the pack. Press the upper edge of the lower packet into the fork of the left thumb so that the two packets will be in the posi-

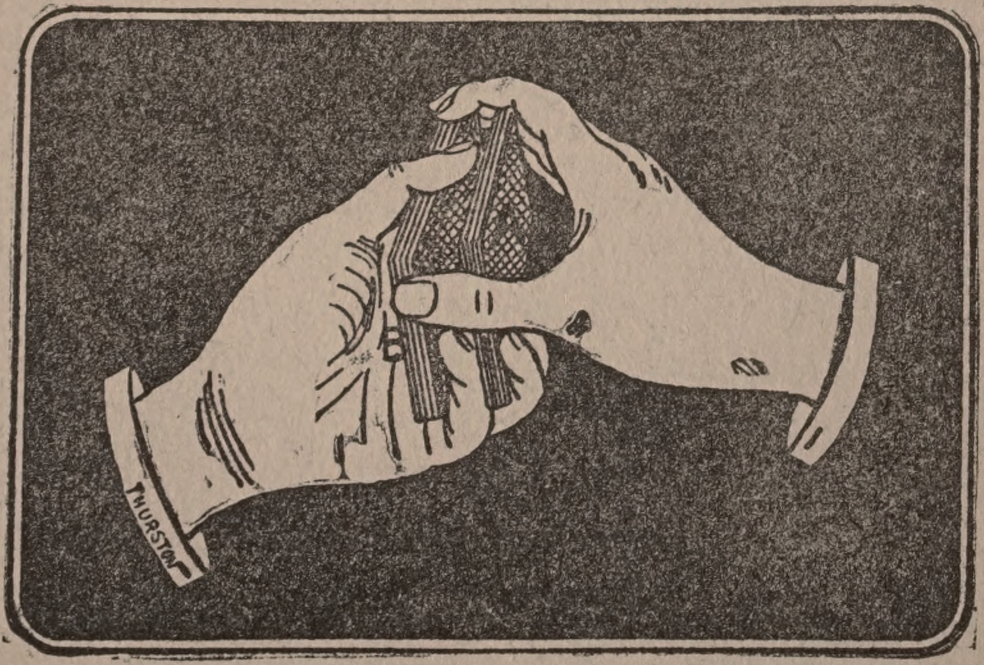


FIG. 2.

tion depicted in Fig. 2. The fingers of the left hand are now extended, causing the upper portion of the pack to be drawn away, at the same time raising (with the right hand) the lower edge of the under pack till the edges of the packets just clear each other (see Fig. 3), when, by the mere act of closing the left hand, they will be brought together as at first, save that they will have changed places, and the desired card will now be on the top. The letters A and B in the illustrations will make this clear.

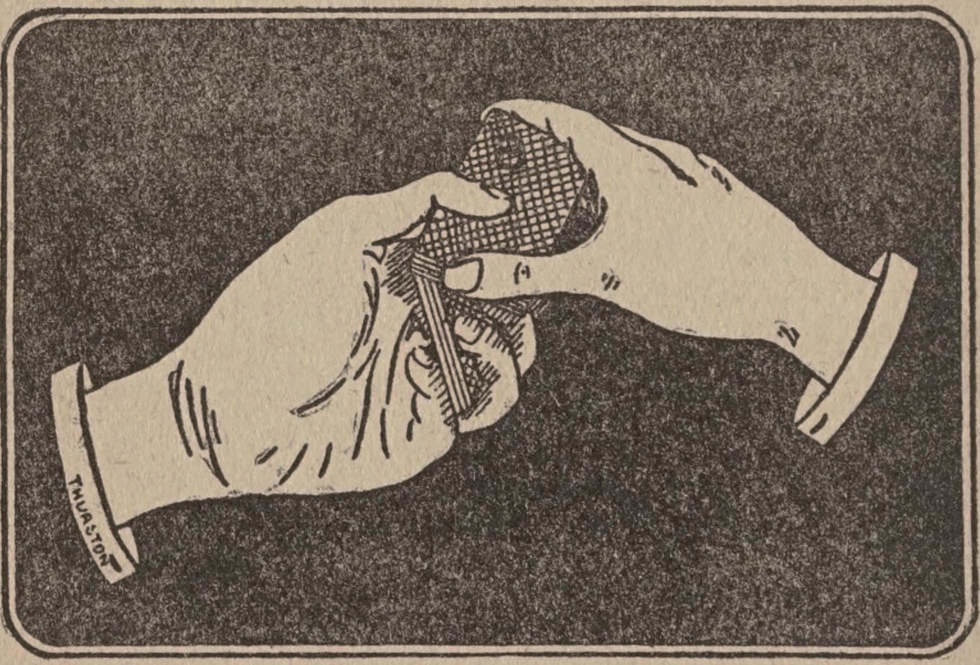


FIG. 3.

The "pass" will appear exceedingly difficult of execution at the outset; but with careful practice, aiming more at neatness than rapidity, the different movements which I have described will melt, as it were, into one, and the sleight can then be accomplished in an absolutely indetectable manner.

There are numerous other methods of making the pass, some with the aid of only one hand; but as the above is conceded to be the most perfect, I have thought it necessary for me to explain merely this one.

THE FORCE.

The sleight with the above title consists of compelling a spectator to select a certain card, and is indispensable in certain tricks.

It is next to impossible in writing to teach the novice to force a card; but the idea will very soon become apparent after the learner has made a few experiments. The card which you desire selected is, in the first place, either at the top or bottom of the pack, the pass is now made (bringing the particular card to the middle) and the pack spread out fanwise, the second finger of the right hand meanwhile pressing on the bottom of the necessary card, as in Fig. 4. A spectator is now asked to select a card from the pack, the performer meantime running the cards quickly from hand to hand, and, as the drawer's fingers approach the pack, the second finger of the right hand literally pushes the desired card into his hand, as in Fig. 5, which represents the card being pushed forward. The card to be forced should be a little more exposed than the rest. This, however, is only the A B C of the

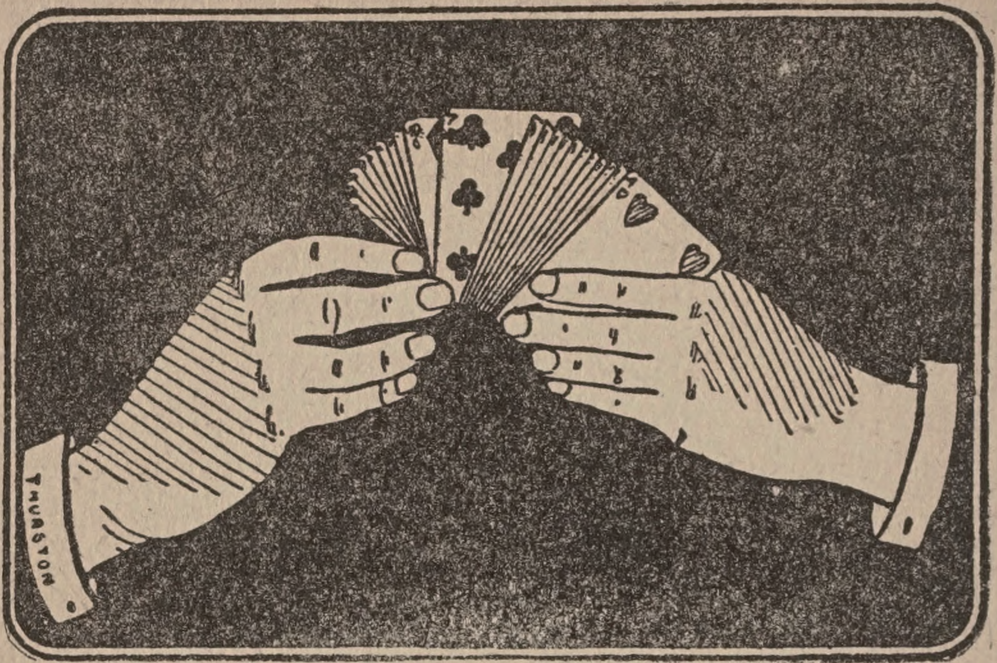


FIG. 4.

"force," the successful operation of which can only be accomplished after innumerable trials. Above all, don't be in a great hurry to get it over.

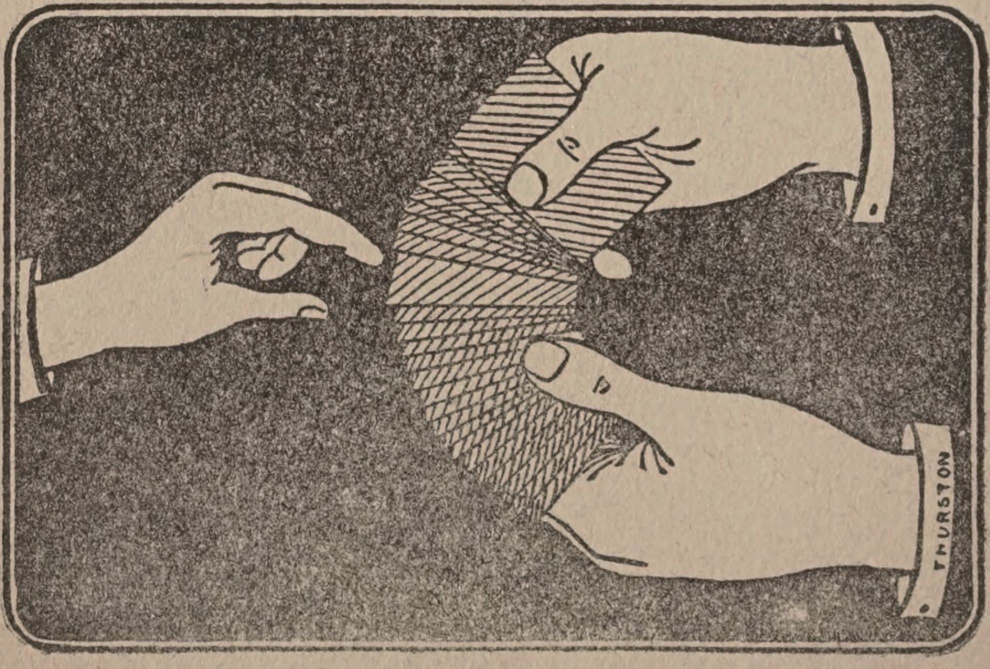


FIG. 5.

Endeavor to appear to be absolutely indifferent as to where the card is taken, even going so far as to say: "Have your choice, sir; take any card you wish."

If by any chance the force fails, and another card is chosen, the performer need not fear a *contretemps*, but with a "Thank you, sir; kindly replace your card anywhere you like in the pack," put the little finger on it, make the pass bringing it to the top, from which position it can be palmed off, or the trick finished as fancy dictates. The first card is now "forced" on some more accommodating person.

THE CHANGE.

A card held in the hand mysteriously changes to an entirely different one.

There are several methods of performing the above sleight; but I shall describe one only, which I consider to be the best.

The card to be changed is held between the first and second finger of the right hand, the pack being held in the left, with the card for which the first is to be changed slightly projecting from the top. The right hand now makes a sweeping motion, and, as it passes the pack, leaves the card at the bottom and brings away, with the thumb and first finger (see Fig. 6), the top one. This may appear to the neophyte to be impossible of indetectable execution, but with even a little practice it will be found

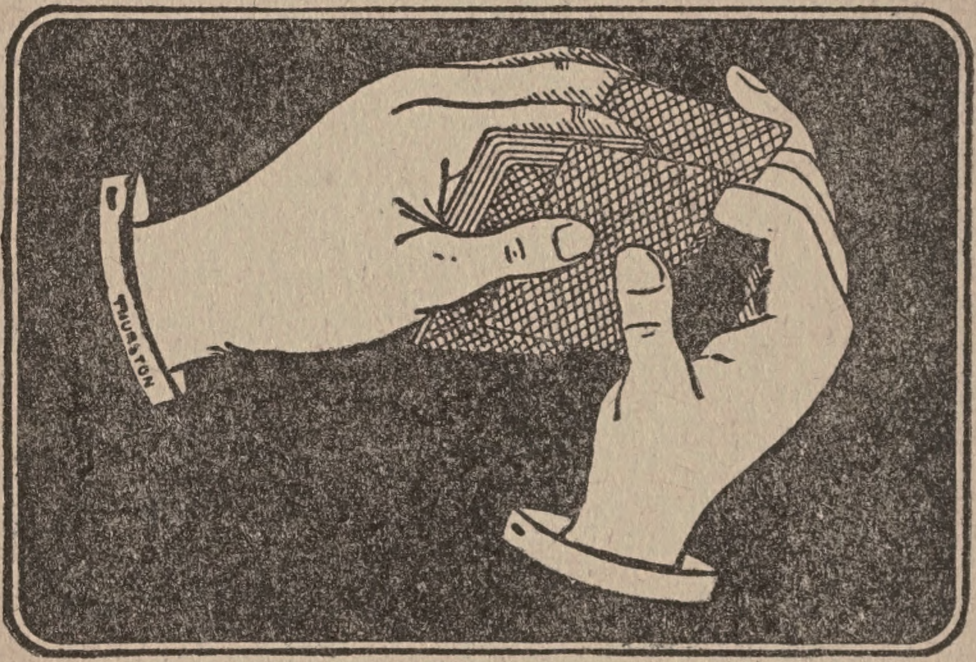
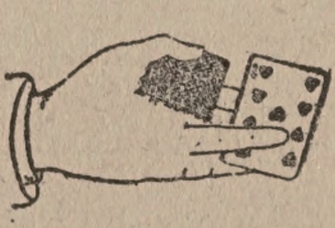


FIG. 6.

that a perfect illusion can be created. If the body makes a half turn from right to left, it will greatly facilitate the deception, or if done in the act of addressing a spectator, and slightly bending forward at the same time.



THE ORDINARY PALM.

It is often necessary to palm or conceal a card in the palm of the hand. Suppose, for instance, a card is chosen from the pack and replaced. The "pass" is then made and the card brought to the top. The pack is now held in the left hand, the right hand approaches the same, and with the second finger pushes forward the top card an eighth of an inch or more, at the same time exerting a slight pressure upon it. This causes the card to be tilted into the palm of the right hand, which forthwith grasps the pack between the first finger and thumb. (See Fig. 7.)

The pack can now safely be handed to another spectator to thoroughly shuffle, and, when returned, the performer has no difficulty in secretly replacing the palmed card on top.

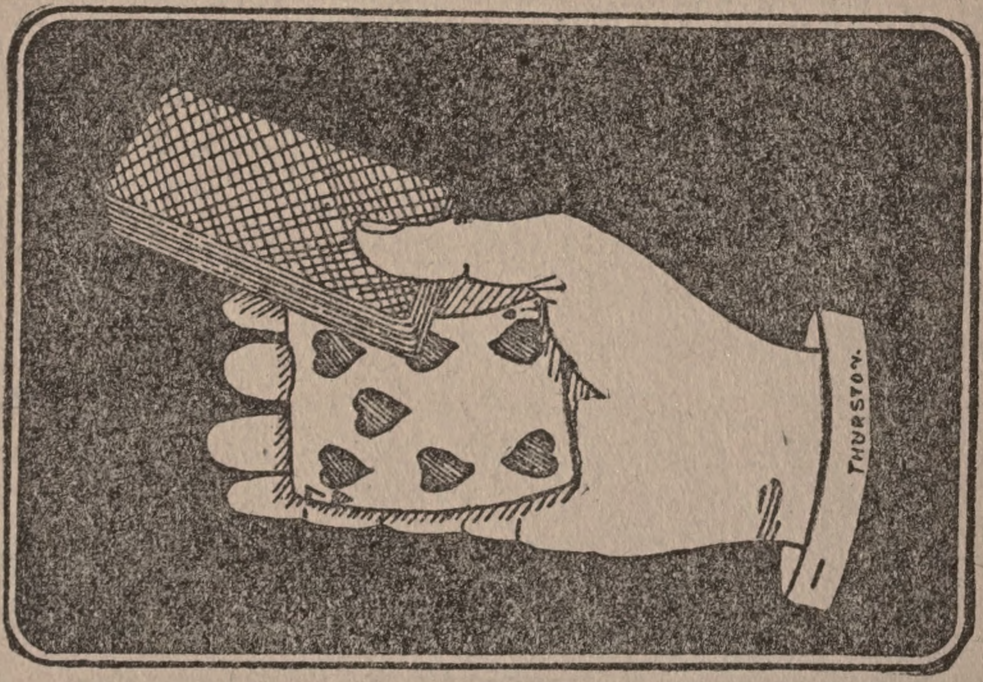


FIG. 7.

While the card is palmed, allow the hand to hang down in a careless position, and never, under any circumstances, even glance at it.

The beginner should devote as much time as possible to the practice of the foregoing sleights, as when he is proficient innumerable new tricks and combinations will suggest themselves to his mind.

CHAPTER III.

The Continuous Front and Back Hand-Palm and Tricks in Connection Therewith.

THE novel sleight with the above title is of comparatively recent invention, the idea it embodies being to enable the performer to conceal one or more cards in his hand, although at any moment showing back and front of the hand to be perfectly empty.

To successfully accomplish this feat, great digital dexterity is essential, but this, of course, can be attained by assiduous practice.

I will first of all describe the method of working this sleight with one card.

To begin with, the card is held between the tips of the middle finger and thumb, as in Fig. 8.

The first and little fingers now grip the card, as in Fig. 9.

The two middle fingers are next bent and brought down under the card and round to the front of same, thereby causing the card to revolve

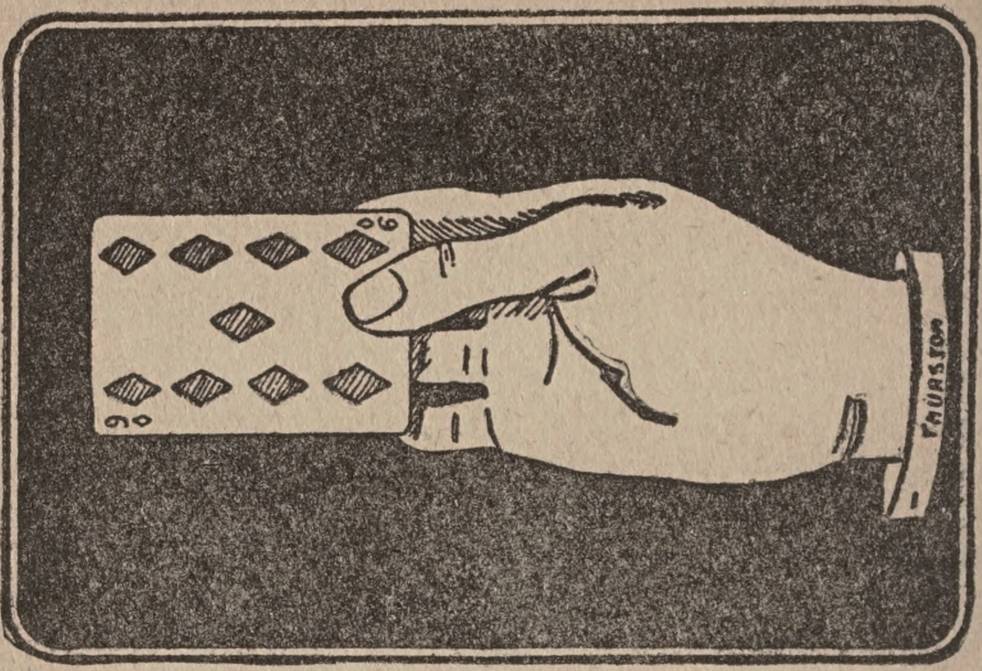


FIG. 8.

between the first and fourth fingers, as though on an axis, and assume the position on the back of the

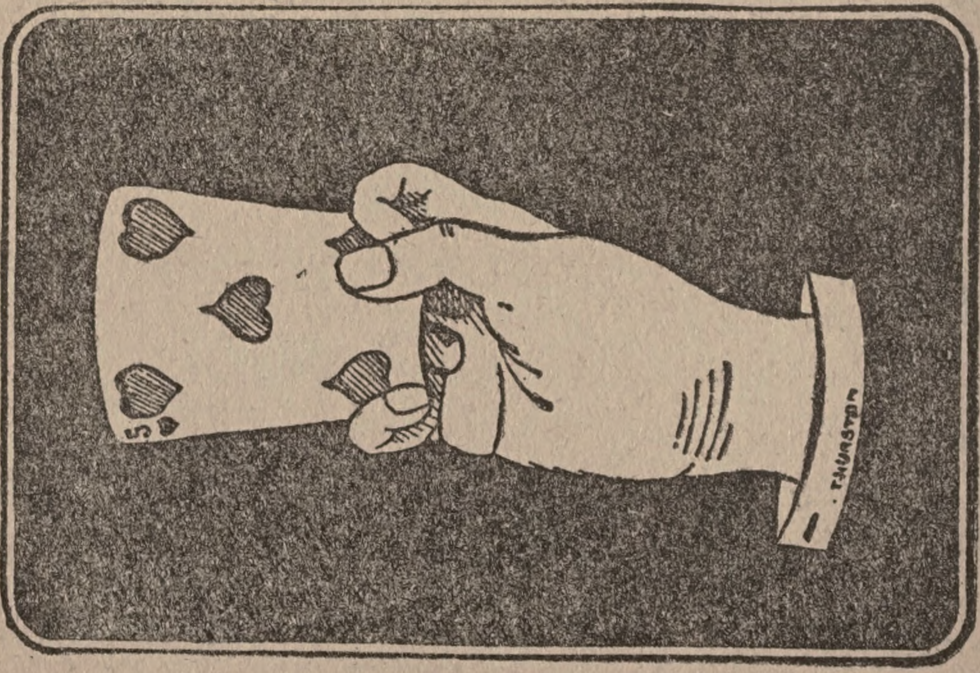


FIG. 9.

hand clipped between the first and second and third and fourth fingers, depicted in Fig. 10.

After considerable practice it will be found that all the movements I have just described will become practically one, and the card will apparently vanish from the hand without the most astute spectator having the faintest idea where, especially if the manipulation is accomplished with a sweeping motion, as though the card were thrown in the air.

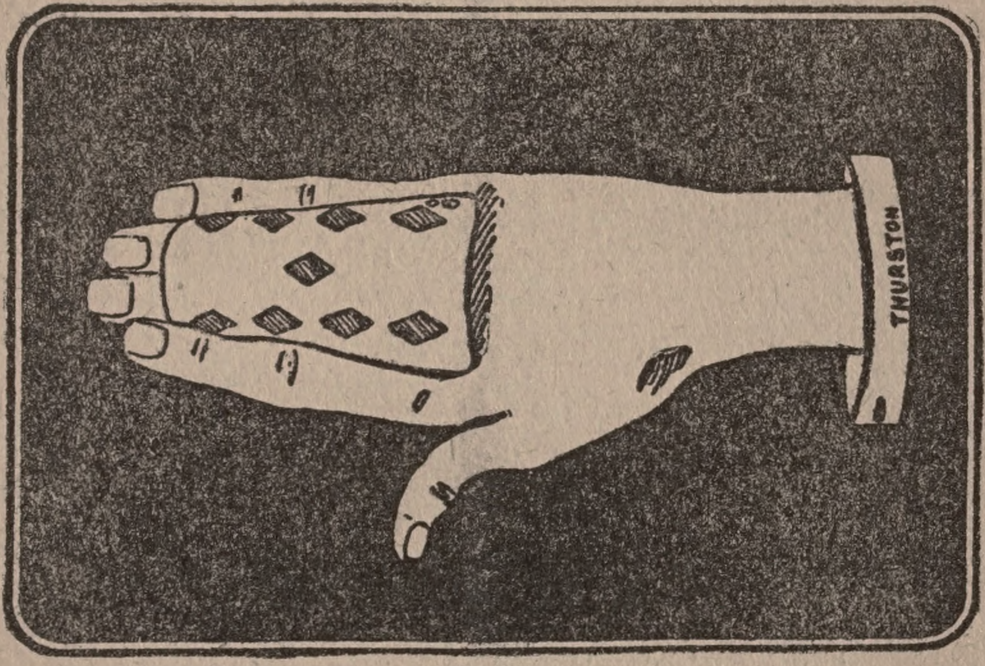


FIG. 10.

Now to reverse the card to the front of the hand again, so as to enable the back of the hand to be shown to the audience.

To accomplish this, the fingers bend forward so that the thumb can press on the middle of the face of the card (see Fig. 11), and pull it sharply round to the front of the hand, where it is held between the fingers, as shown in Fig. 12.

The principal difficulty encountered by students when learning this sleight, is to prevent the audience from catching a glimpse of the cards as they are brought from the back to the front of the hand, or *vice versâ.* This can, however, be surmounted by practising before a mirror, as you will then be able to ascertain the exact angle at which the movement can be indetectably accomplished.

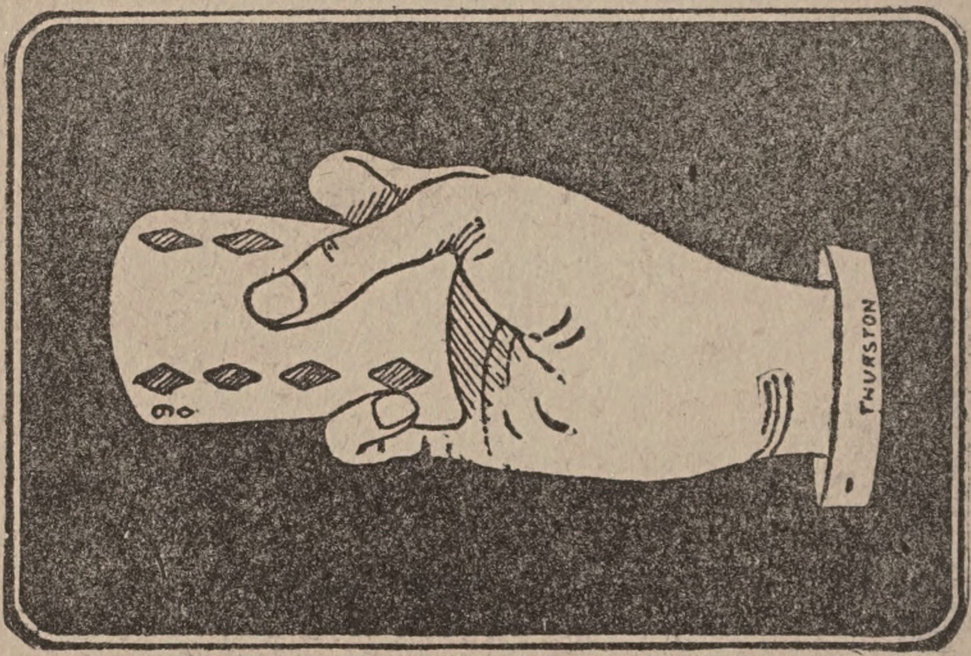


FIG. 11.

To further heighten the effect of the sleight, when the card is in the position (as in Fig. 12), with the back of the hand, of course, facing the audience, I push the card down into the palm, as shown in Fig. 13.

This movement, which is absolutely impossible to describe in writing, will become apparent to the learner after a few trials.

With the card in this position, of course the fingers and thumb can be spread wide apart.

When manipulating more than one card, the above movements all hold good, with the exception of bringing the cards from the back of the hand to the front. Instead of the thumb pulling the cards round to the front, which would practically be impossible, it simply presses upon them, while the first finger moves to the other end of the cards, and pushes them down into the attitude illustrated in Fig. 12.

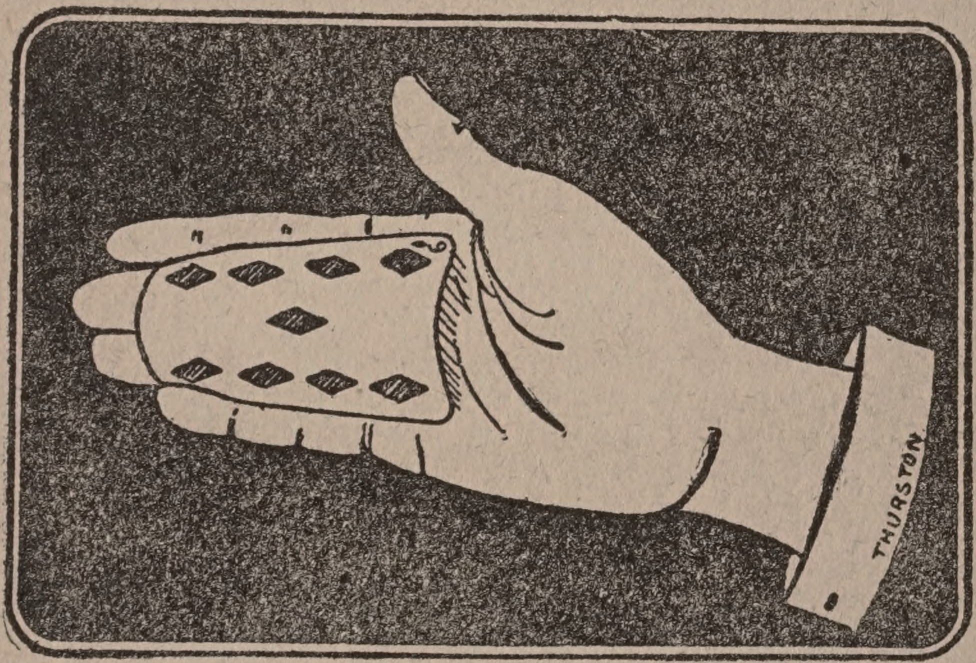


FIG. 12.

The foregoing is the correct method of executing the continuous front and back hand-palm.

There are, of course, innumerable additions to the original idea, a few of which, used by me in my act, I will now describe.

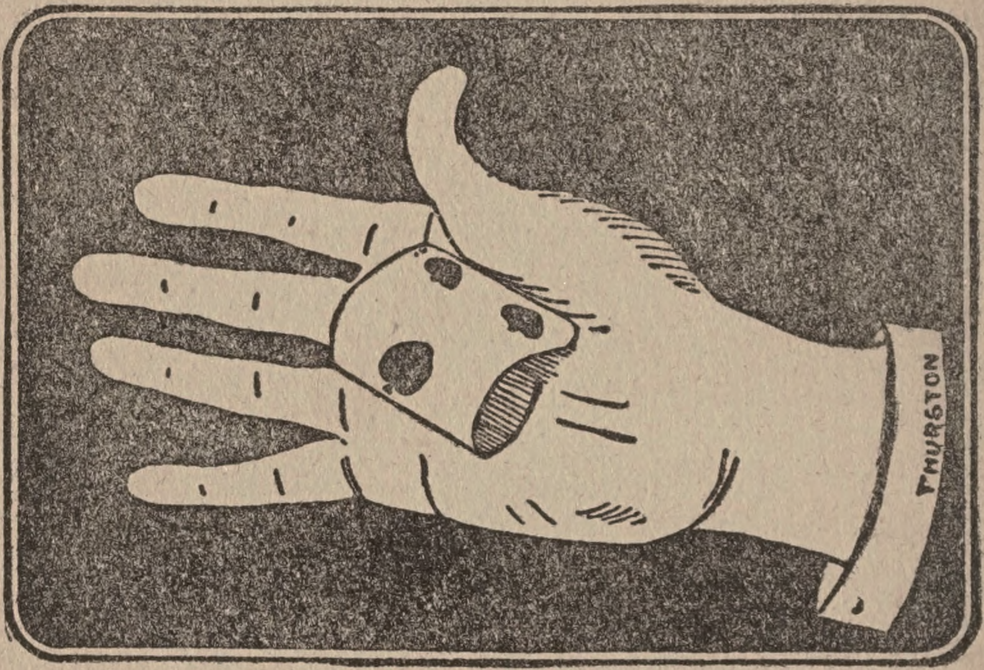


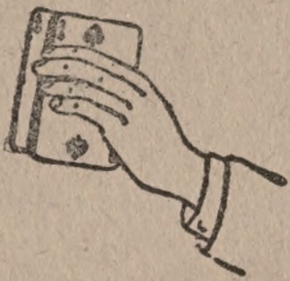
FIG. 13.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF FIVE CARDS ONE AT A TIME.

FIRST METHOD.

In this trick the performer takes one card, as in Fig. 8, and back-palms it. He then takes another one between the middle finger and thumb, and slides it on to the back of the hand on top of the first one, the first and fourth fingers slightly opening to receive it. The other three cards are treated in the same manner.

This sleight will be found somewhat difficult at first, but, being so effective, it will amply repay the performer for any time he may spend on its acquirement, as I consider it one of the best tricks in my act.



SECOND METHOD.

In this method of performing the foregoing trick, after the artiste has back-palmed one card, in the

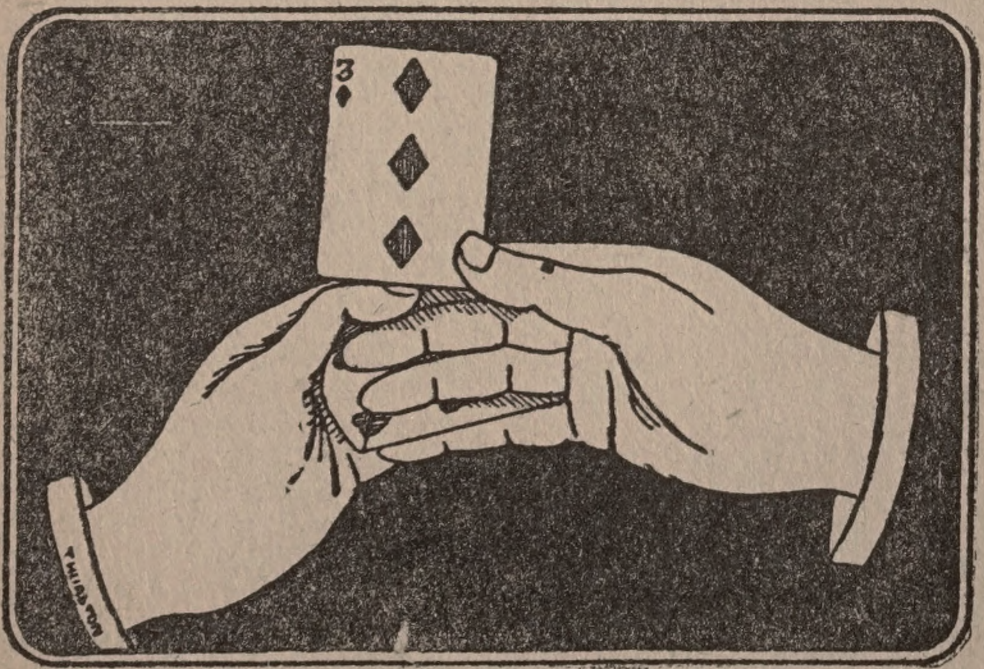
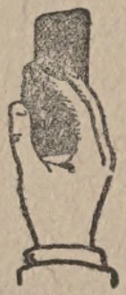


FIG. 14.

act of placing the second card in position, he palms off with his left hand from the back of the right the first card vanished. (See Fig. 14, which represents the first card being removed). This is, of course, repeated with the remainder. Each card vanished is palmed off into the left hand in the act of placing the next one in position between the finger and thumb of the right, thus enabling the performer to show that he only holds one card in his right hand. The remaining four can then, if desired, be produced from the side of the left leg.

The sleight is, I believe, unknown to conjurers, and, if neatly executed, will cause great astonishment.



THE PRODUCTION OF CARDS ONE AT A TIME AT THE FINGER-TIPS FROM THE BACK-HAND PALM.

This is one of the prettiest effects in connection with the Back-hand Palm.

After the performer has vanished by means of the back-hand palm, say, five cards, and shown both sides of the hands to be empty, he proceeds to reproduce the cards one by one at the finger-tips, as in Fig. 15.

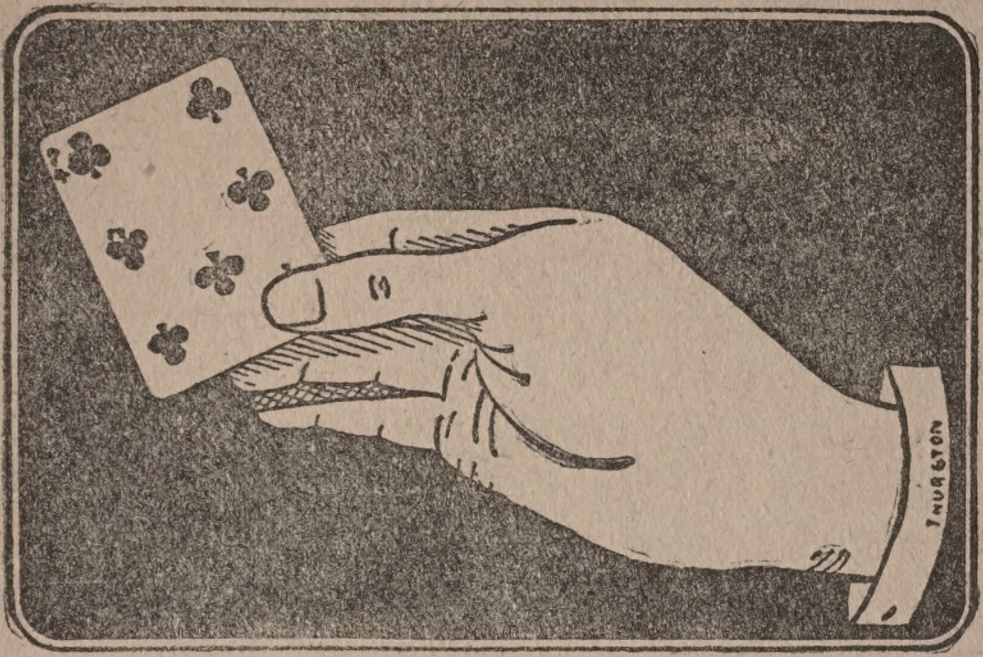


FIG. 15.

This is accomplished in the following manner:

When it is desired to produce one card from the back of the hand, the thumb bends round to the

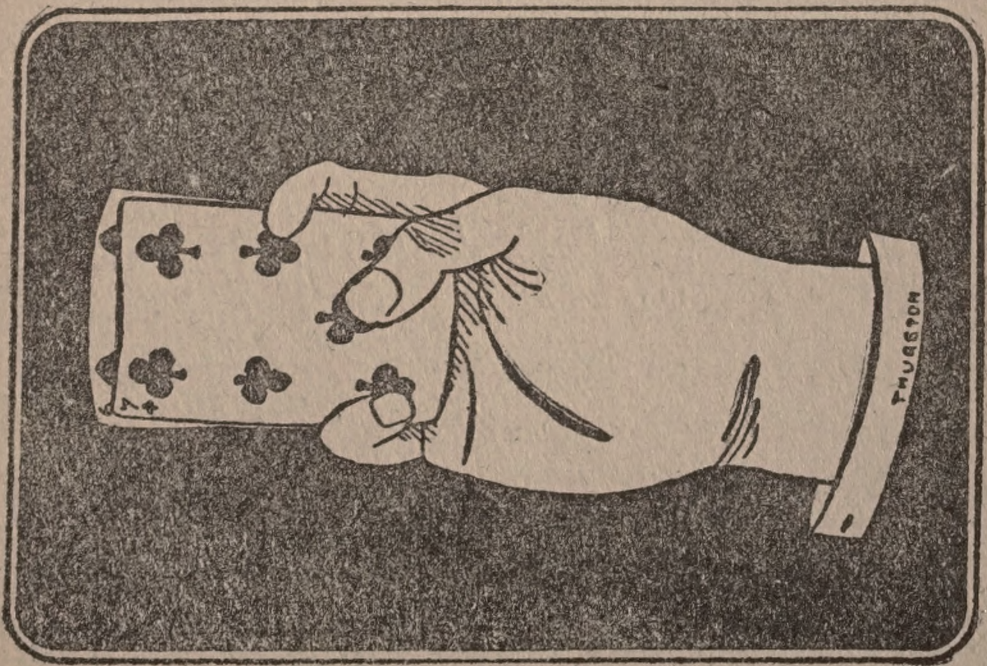


FIG. 16.

middle of the nearest end of the outside card and literally pulls it away from the rest, the first and fourth fingers aiding in its release by slightly relaxing their pressure (see Fig. 16). Once quite free from the back of the hand, the card is pushed by the thumb into the position depicted in Fig. 15. This must be done very slowly at first, but, of course, in the actual performance all the above movements must be made simultaneously. If this is done with a slight wave of the hand, it will appear to the audience that the performer actually caught the card from the air.

The effect of this trick can be further heightened by the performer, after having caught, say, three cards, showing his right hand to be absolutely empty, back and front, and the fingers spread wide apart. The following is the procedure:

As each card is produced at the right-hand finger-tips, it is placed in the left hand. (Fig. 17 shows the exact positions of both hands.) When the performer has caught the third card, in the act of placing it in the left hand, he secretly leaves the cards, still back-palmed, behind the three cards now in the left hand, gripped by the second finger. (See Fig. 18, which represents a back view showing the position of the hand and cards.)

The right hand is now shown empty, and the performer makes the remark: "No; certainly not. Nothing between the fingers. All we have here is three cards," meanwhile counting with the thumb of the right hand those in the left hand. Under

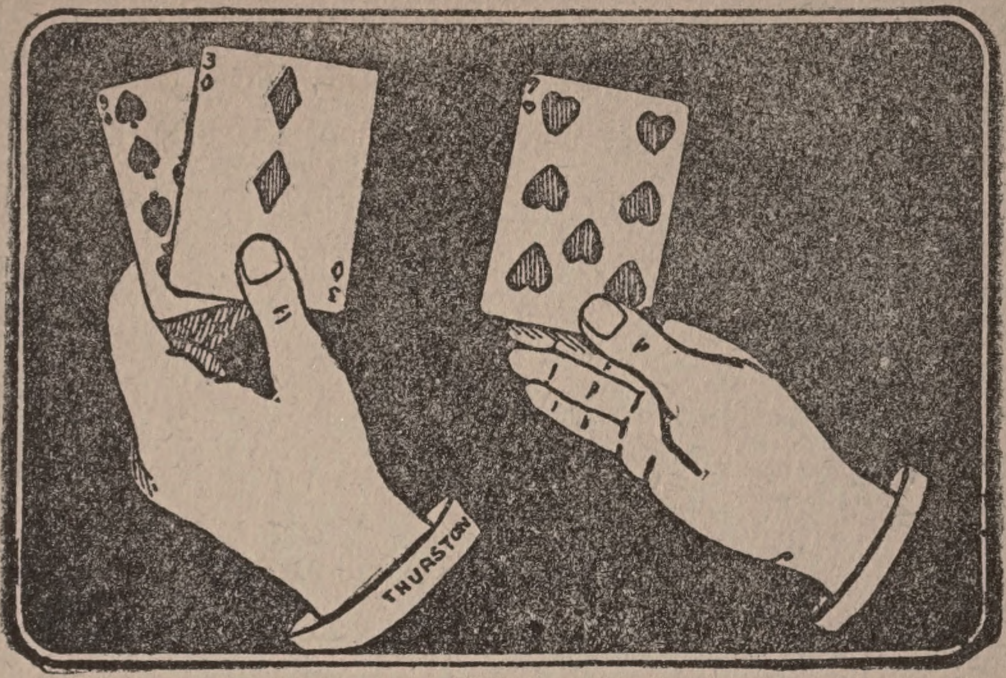


FIG. 17.

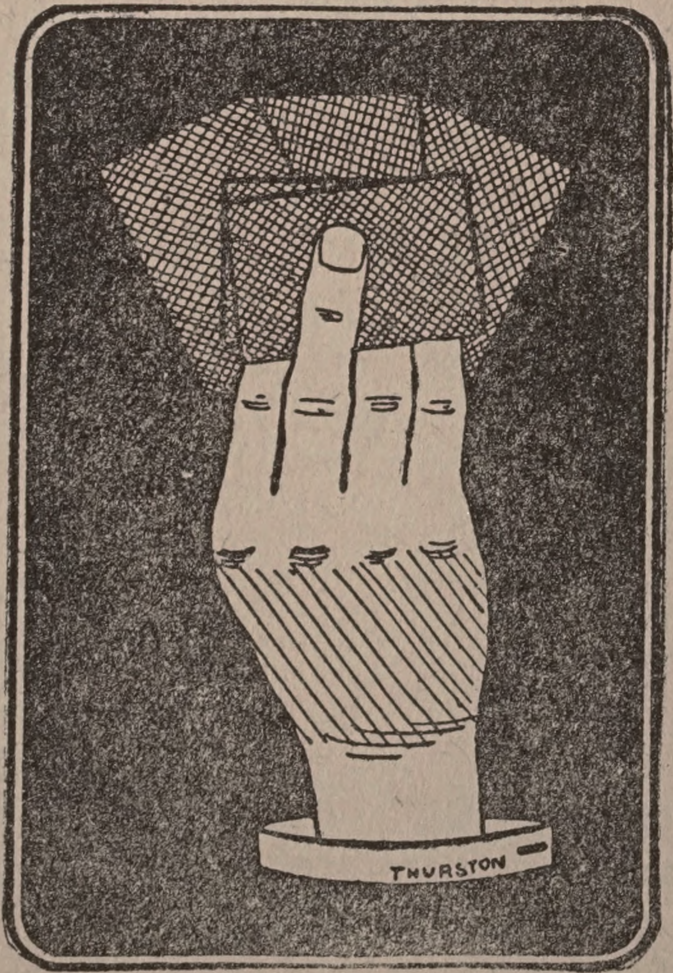


FIG. 18.

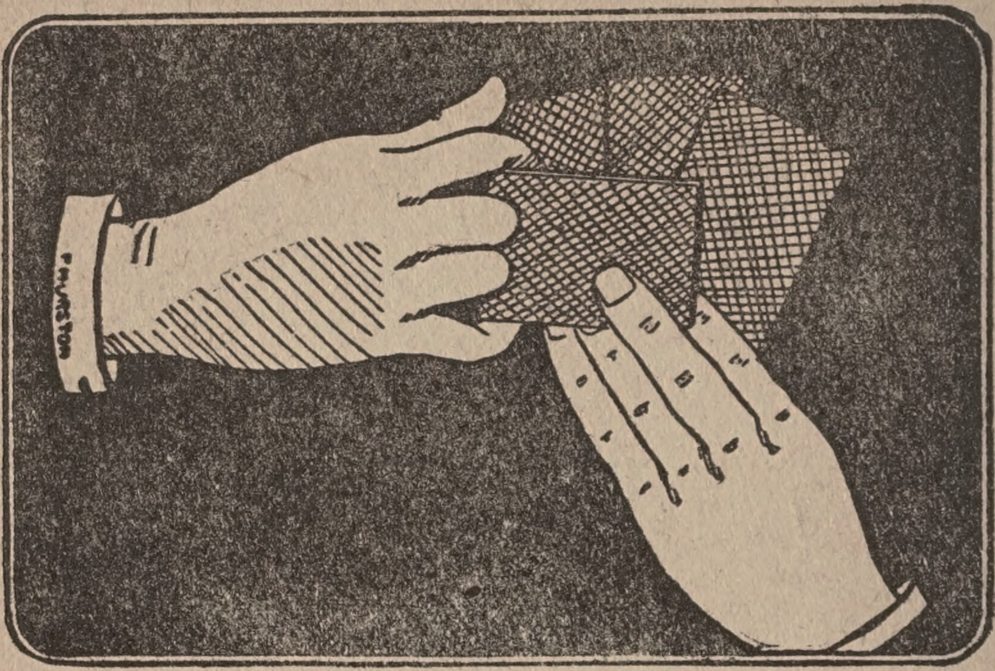


FIG. 19.

cover of this movement the two hidden cards are again back-palmed in the right hand (see Fig. 19), and reproduced at the will of the artist.

THE PRODUCTION OF CARDS AT THE FINGER-TIPS FROM THE ORDINARY PALM.

My original method of producing the cards singly at the finger-tips, with the back of the hand toward the audience having met with such a great amount of success, I am pleased to acquaint my readers with the correct method of its execution.

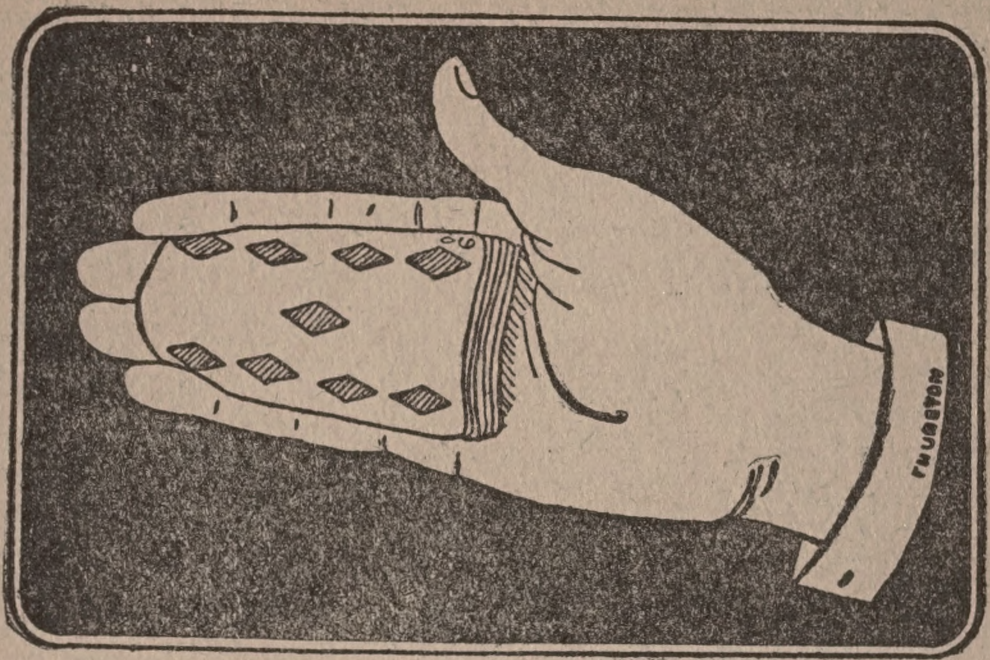


FIG. 20.

From the ordinary palm the cards are transferred to the finger palm, as in Fig. 20. The little finger now very slightly relaxes its pressure on the cards,

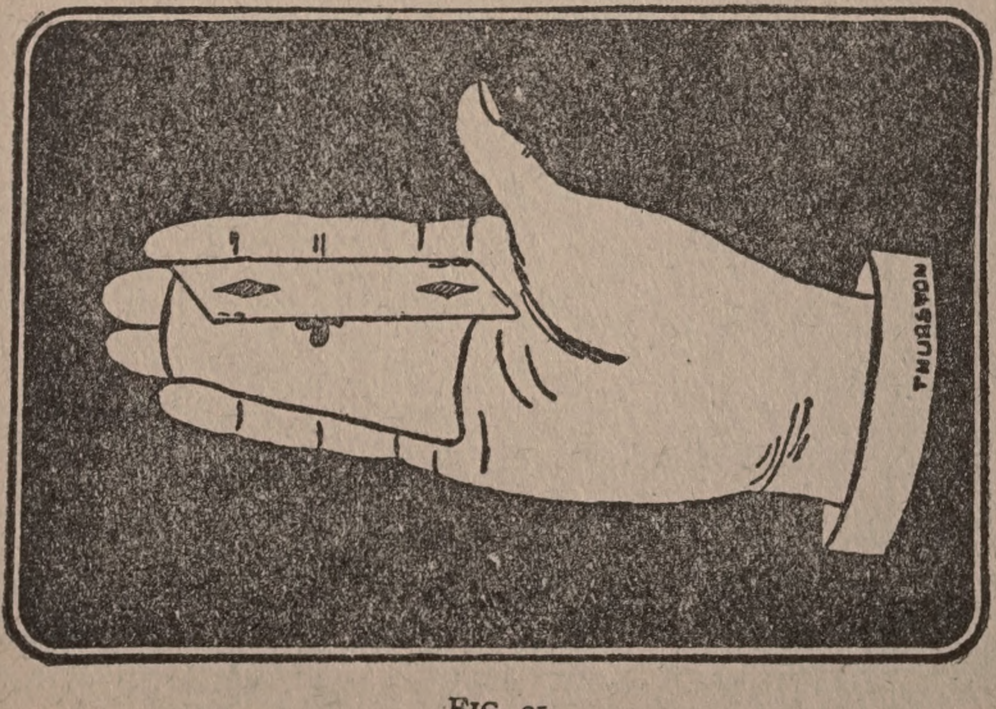


FIG. 21.

when it will be found upon practice that one card will be released (see Fig. 21).

The thumb now comes down under the end of the card and pushes it up into the position depicted in Fig. 22, the back of the hand, of course, facing the audience.

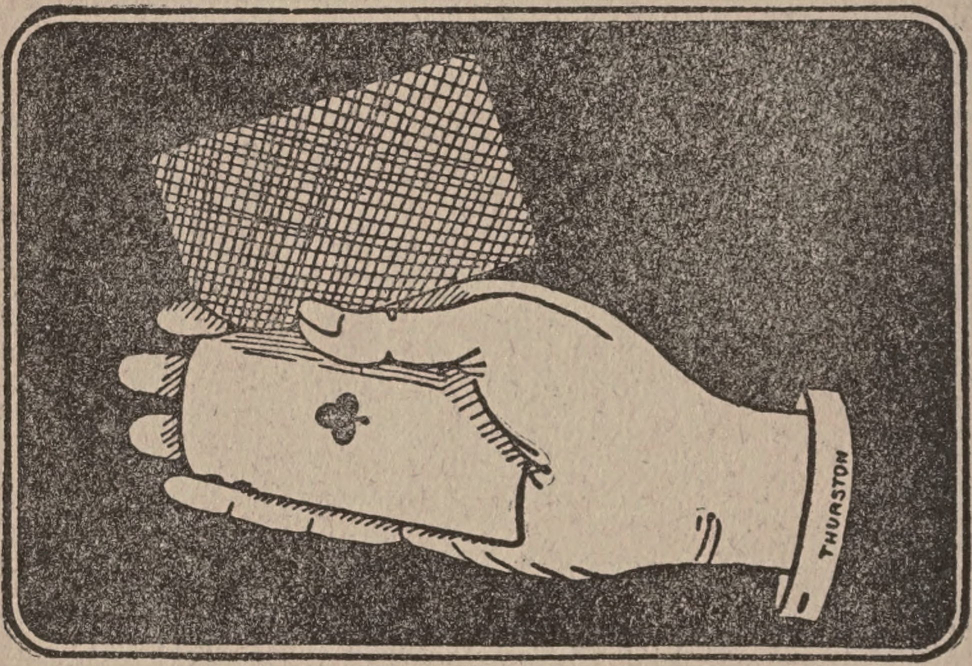
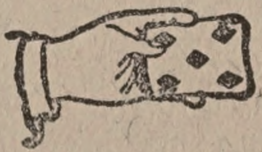


FIG. 22.

I am usually in the habit of performing this sleight with from twenty-five to thirty ordinary cards, but three or four will be quite enough for the beginner to commence with.



PASSING A CARD THROUGH THE KNEES, Etc.

A card—say the ace of spades,—is held in the left hand in the position shown in Fig. 23. It now vanishes, immediately reappearing in the right hand (see Fig. 24), having apparently passed through the knees. It is next passed back to its original position, and then again into the right hand.

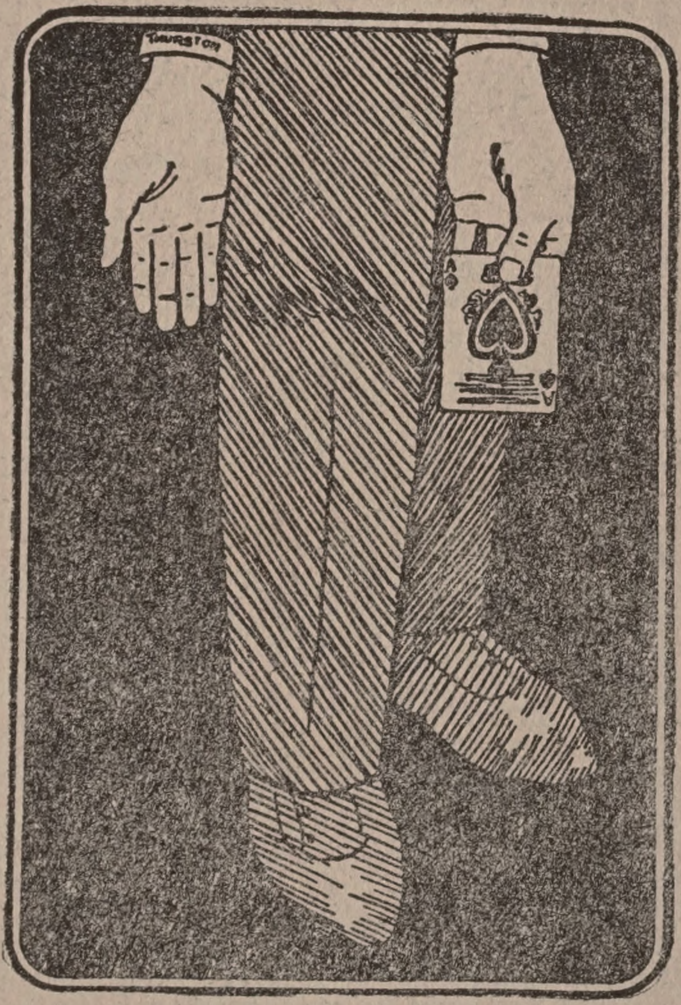


FIG. 23.

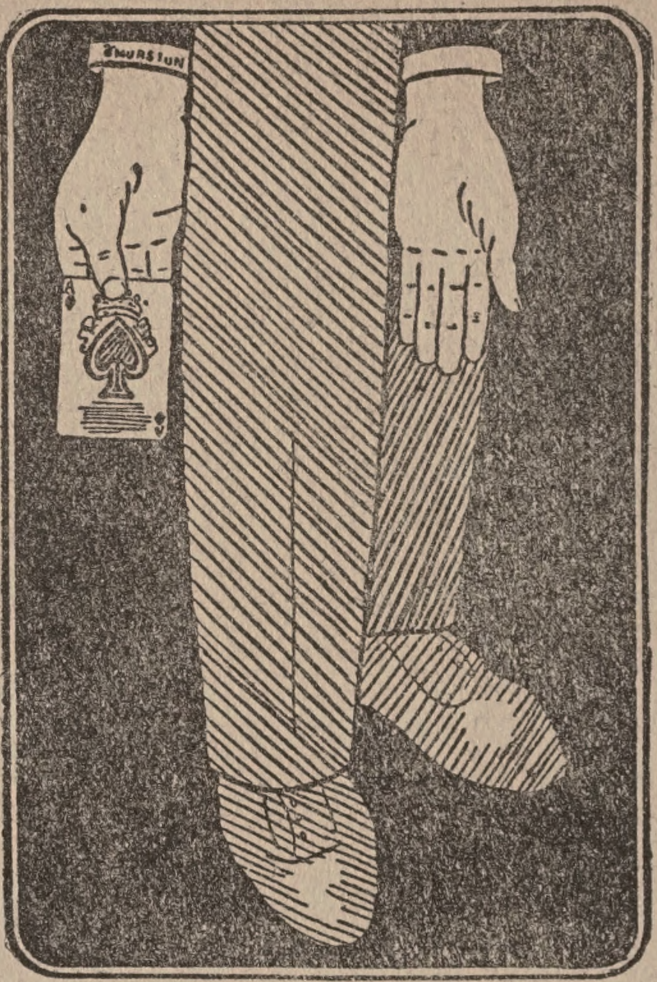


FIG. 24.

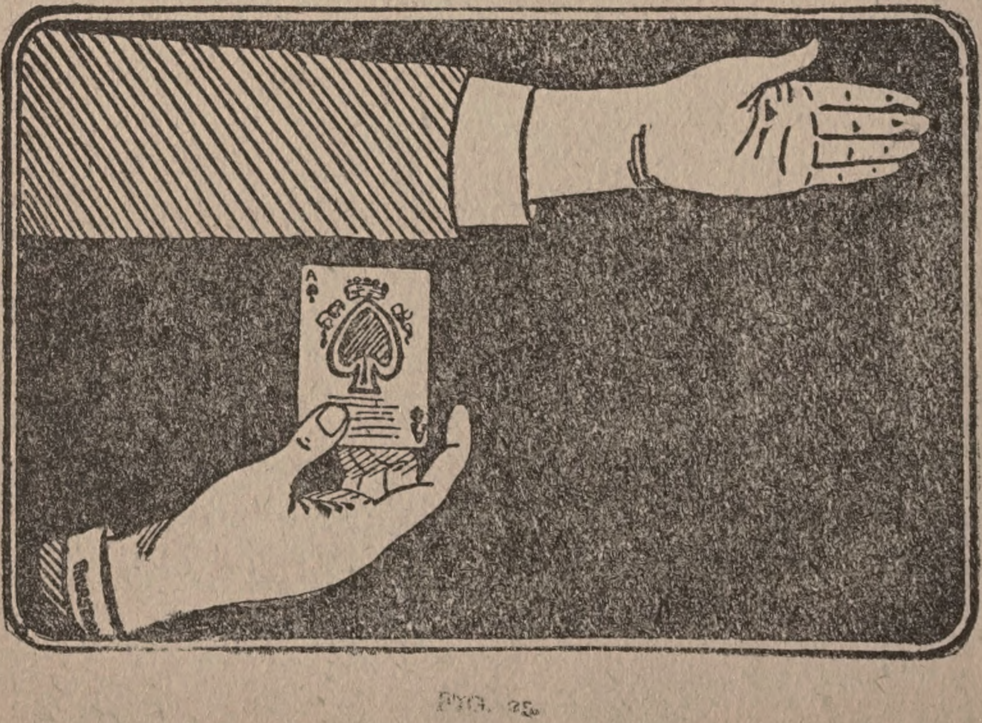


FIG. 25.

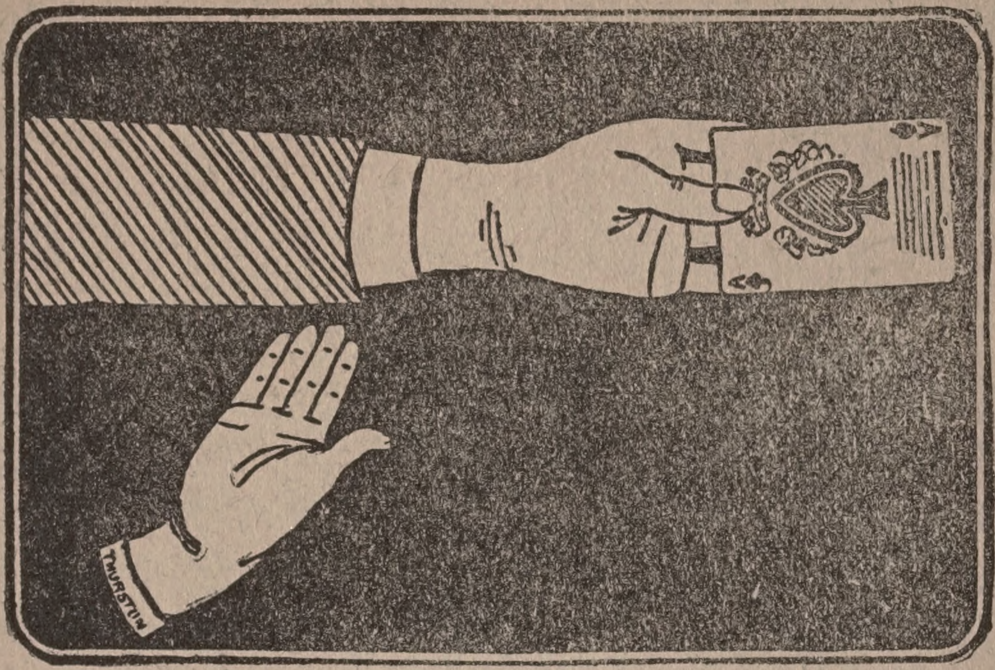


FIG. 26.

Both hands now assume the attitude illustrated in Fig. 25. The card is caused to apparently pass along the arm into the left hand (see Fig. 26), and

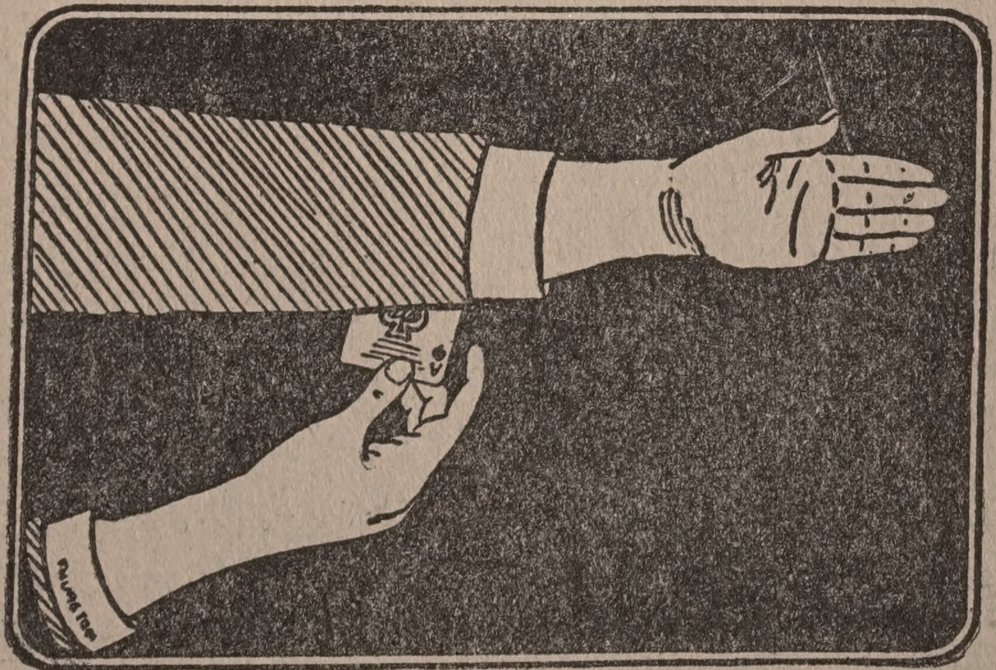


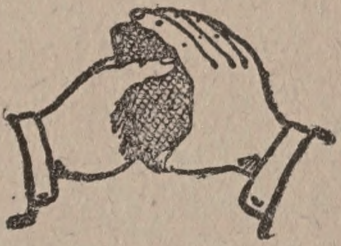
FIG. 27.

then back into the right (see Fig. 27). It is then taken in the left hand and vanished, both hands being shown empty, and the card is reproduced at the finger-tips as though caught in the air.

This, to my mind, excellent trick is accomplished chiefly by the performer being able to execute the front- and back-hand palm with both hands with equal facility. There are, of course, two cards used, and as the method for secretly obtaining possession of the duplicate card is somewhat unique and novel, I have come to the conclusion that I had better describe this trick in detail, as it is the foundation for innumerable other sleights.

In the first place, the performer takes in reality two aces of spades, but held closely together so that they appear to the audience as one card only. Both cards are now back-palmed, and hands shown empty. One only of the cards is "caught" at the finger-tips, and this is forthwith taken into the left hand and held in the first position for passing through the knees. It is now (with a swinging motion of the hand as if to throw the card behind the knee) back-palmed, and the duplicate (which has remained on the back of the other hand) produced in the right hand. This can be repeated at the wish of the performer. A certain time must be spent in getting the hands to work harmoniously together. If this is done, the illusion is perfect. The passing of the card along the arm is, of course, accomplished in a similar manner.

The right hand now places the card which is visible to the audience between the second finger and thumb of the left hand, which forthwith back-palms it on top of the duplicate (by the method described on page 25). Both hands are now shown empty, and as a *finale* the two cards are produced as one and laid on the table, this being easily brought about by tightly holding them together as in the first stage of the trick.



CHAPTER IV.

The "Thurston" System of Expert Card Manipulation.

IN this chapter I propose describing a system of Card Manipulation originated by myself a few years ago. I am, however, indebted to my friend, Mr. Si Stebbens, of America, for many valuable suggestions and ideas with regard to its conception.

The series of tricks about to be described are specially recommended to professionals, amateurs, and novices alike, as they are all absolutely new.

The whole system can be thoroughly learned in an hour, and when once this is done, the performer can exhibit tricks with cards which, to the uninitiated, seem altogether to transcend human ability.

A few effects to be obtained with the aid of this system are as follows:

Seven or eight cards are selected (not forced) in a bunch from a previously shuffled pack. The performer can instantly name the chosen cards.

The artist first shuffling the pack, a spectator is then asked to name any card, whereupon the performer states its correct position in the pack, and, to corroborate his assertion, immediately proceeds to cut the pack at the desired card.

Three cards are selected by a member of the audience, and, without looking at same, are placed by himself in his pocket. The performer now calls out the name of a certain card, which we will suppose is the eight of diamonds, and requests the spectator to take one of the three cards from his pocket, which, upon examination, is shown to be the eight of diamonds. This is repeated with the remaining two cards.

The foregoing are but a few of the many brilliant and bewildering tricks possible of performance by the method I am about to describe.

I have for some time past been accustomed to present this series of tricks at all my private engagements, and I can, without hesitation, emphatically state that for parlor or drawing-room work there are no better card-tricks extant.

The principal secret of the whole of the tricks herein explained lies in a novel prearrangement of the pack of cards used.

The cards should, in the first place, be laid out on the table in the order as shown on following page.

The second card (the four of spades) should now be placed on the first one (the ace of clubs), then the third one (the seven of hearts), and so on to the end.

It will be observed that each card is three higher

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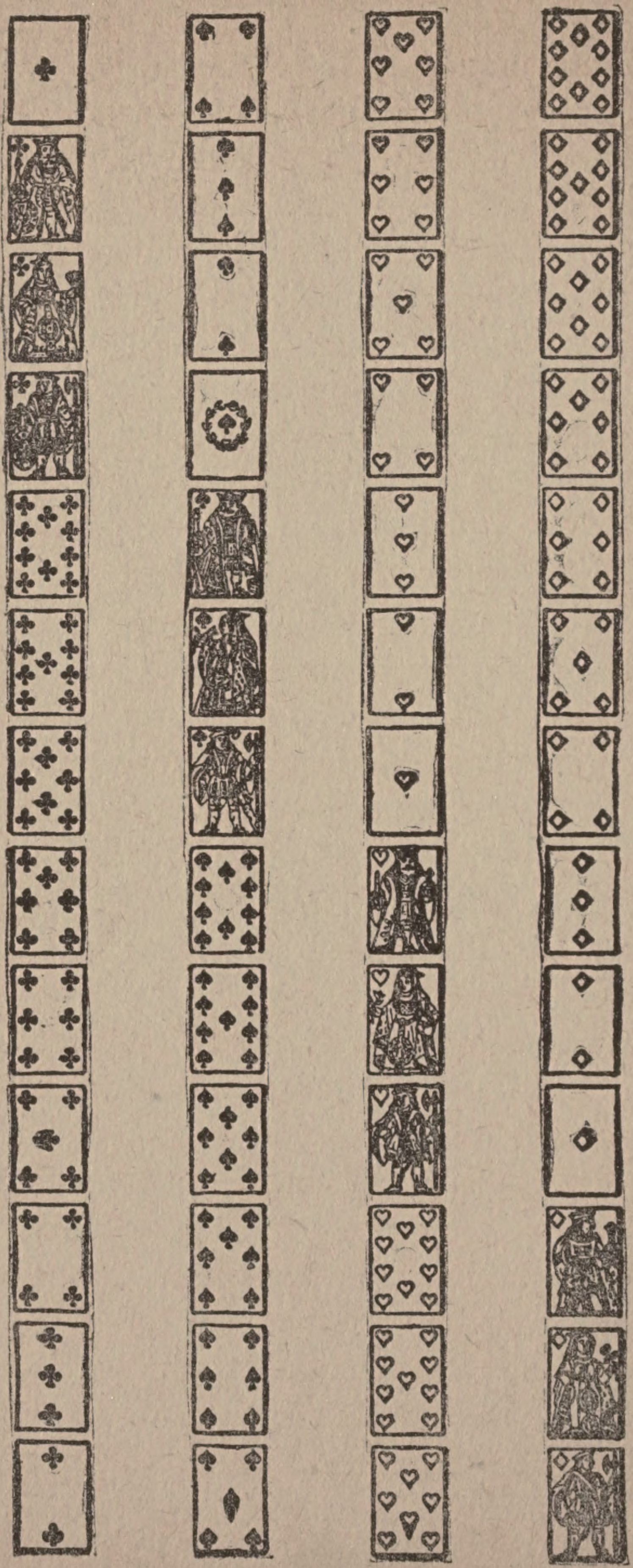


than the one immediately behind it, the arrangement of the suits being: Clubs, spades, hearts, diamonds. The precise arrangement of the suits is practically immaterial, and it would, perhaps, be as well for the student to adopt a system of his own. The arrangement of the Court cards is: Jack—11, queen—12, king—13, so that supposing the bottom card of the pack was the jack of clubs, the performer would instantly know that the next card beginning at the top of the pack is the ace of spades.

The performer should, by means of his pocket or otherwise, exchange the pack he has been previously using, for a similar pack, prepared as just described.

For stage or drawing-room purposes, a very ingenious little piece of apparatus has recently been devised to enable the artiste to indetectably change one pack for another, and as it would be most useful in this case, I think I cannot do better than give my readers a description of it.

The principal part of this piece of apparatus consists of a metal ring, 6in. or 8in. in diameter, to which is attached a black cloth bag. To the ring is soldered a flat strip of metal, having riveted to it a spring clip. By means of a sharp point protruding from the rear, the apparatus can be easily and quickly attached to the back of a chair by pushing the point into the woodwork (see Fig. 28). In the clip is inserted a pack of cards arranged in the order I have explained, which the performer must substitute for an ordinary pack by means of the following ruse:

With the pack in the right hand, he takes hold of the chair in such a manner that the thumb only is visible to the audience, the pack and the fingers being hidden by the back of the chair.

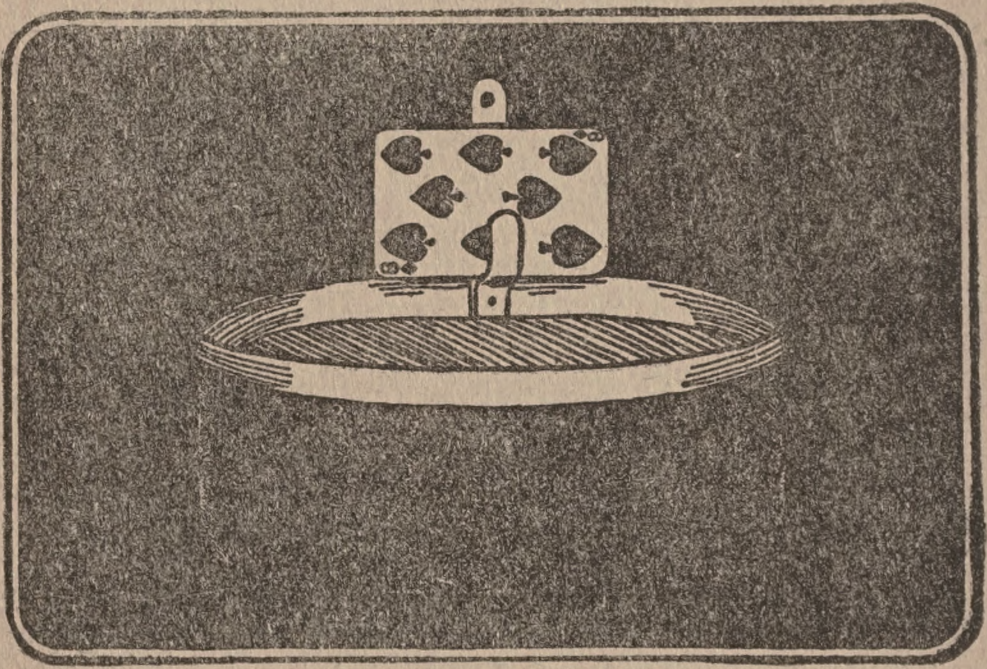
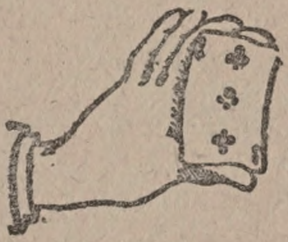


FIG. 28.

The left hand now takes hold of the seat of the chair, which is set on one side, as if it were in the way. During this operation the pack of cards is dropped from the right hand into the bag, and the duplicate pack removed from the clip. If this is done neatly and without undue haste, the audience will never suspect that a change has been accomplished.

A more simple change, but which will answer the purpose quite as well, especially for an impromptu performance, is to simply place the pack which you have been using in your coat pocket, and an instant later take out from the same pocket the prepared pack.

The performer next proceeds to make what is known as a false shuffle with the prepared pack. As this is a most useful adjunct to many beautiful experiments with cards, I will describe two of the methods employed in its execution.



FIRST METHOD.

This is one of the very many deceptive sleights originated by the celebrated Professor Charlier, and is undoubtedly the best false shuffle in existence, but owing to the great amount of practice required for its successful accomplishment, it is rarely made use of except by professionals, but if thoroughly mastered the performer can deceive experts.

The pack is held in the left hand, and three or four of the top cards are passed into the right. Now pass the remaining cards in small parcels alternately above and below these, but the cards that are passed below are taken from the top of the left-hand packet, and the cards that are placed above are passed from the bottom of the left-hand packet, this being exactly the reverse of the ordinary movement.

To pass the cards from the top of the left-hand packet to the bottom of the right-hand packet is fairly easy, they being pushed forward with the left thumb, but it is the reverse movement that is difficult.

I recommend this style of false shuffle to the lover of deceptive sleights, but for those who do not care to devote sufficient time for its indetectable execution I herewith describe a very easy, but at the same time effective, false shuffle originated by myself.

SECOND METHOD.

The pack is held in both hands, as in Fig. 29. The lower half of the pack is now removed with the right hand, but in doing so a few of the hindermost cards of the pack in the left hand are left slightly protruding, as in Fig. 30.

The parcel in the right hand is now replaced on the front of the pack. If this is repeated with rapidity, the effect to the audience will be that the cards are thoroughly mixed, whereas in reality they are only cut.

Armed with the prearranged pack, and the ability to execute one of the false shuffles, the performer is now ready to present the following series of tricks:

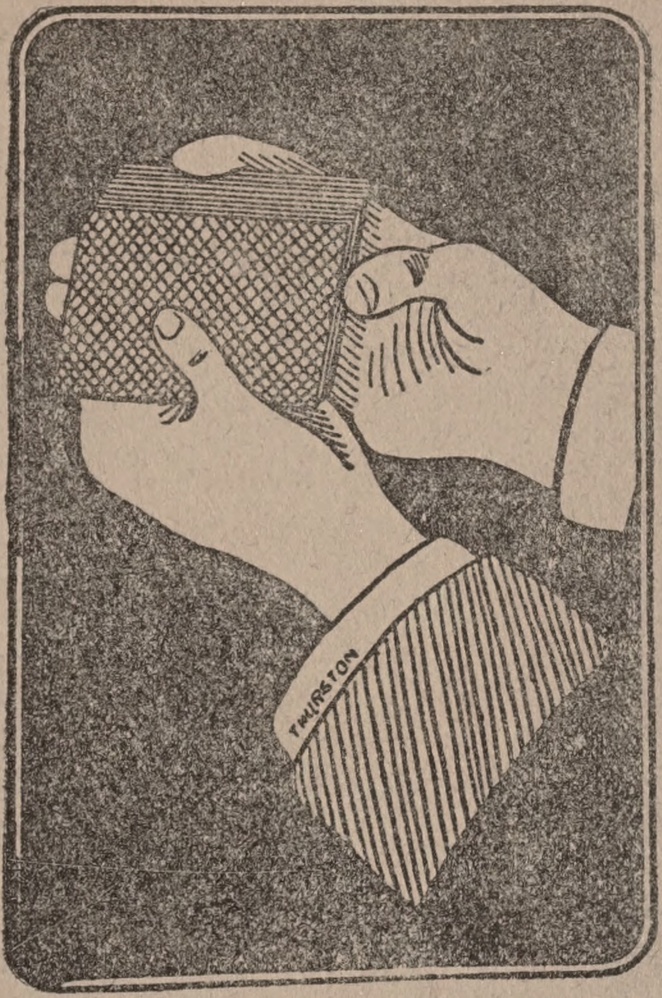


FIG. 29.

TO INSTANTLY NAME ANY CARD CHOSEN.

The pack is spread out fanwise to a spectator, with a request for him to select a card. When this is done, the performer, in a casual manner, cuts the cards at the point where the chosen card was removed, thereby bringing the card that was next above the selected one to the bottom of the

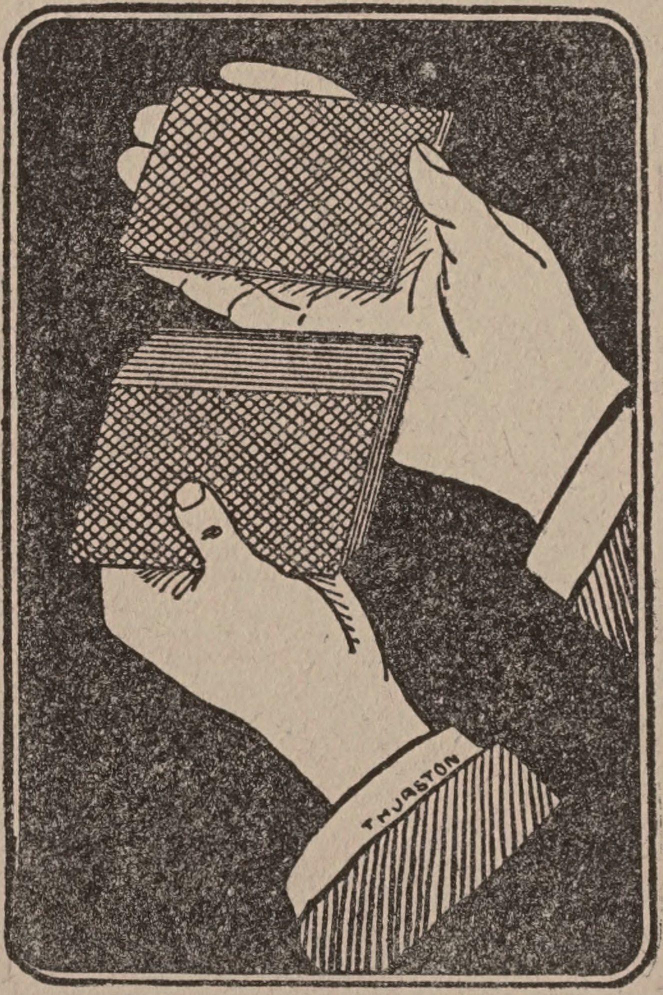


FIG. 30.

pack, and the artiste has simply to catch a glimpse of the bottom card, which tells him the name of the chosen one. For instance, suppose the bottom card was the six of spades, the performer knows that the selected card must be the nine of hearts, because hearts follow spades, and, therefore, the next card (the one drawn) is a heart, and it will be remembered in the arrangement of the pack that each card is three higher than the preceding one. Therefore, if the bottom card is the six of spades, the selected card will be the nine of hearts.

TO TELL THE NAMES OF ANY NUMBER OF CARDS CHOSEN.

A spectator is asked to take out a few cards in a bunch—eight or nine, or in fact as many as he likes. The cut is now made, and the bottom card noted, and the performer is able to instantly name the chosen cards. When this has been done, if the cards are replaced on the bottom of the pack one by one in the order as chosen, the pack will still be in the correct condition for further tricks.

When naming the cards selected, so as not to give any astute member of the audience a chance to observe that each card is three spots higher than the preceding one, it is advisable not to call them out in their exact order.

Supposing the cards selected were the jack of spades, ace of hearts, four of diamonds, seven of clubs, ten of spades, king of hearts, three of diamonds, and six of clubs, the performer could name them in the following manner, thereby eliminating all suspicion of prearrangement:

Jack of spades, ace of hearts, then pass the four of diamonds and call the seven of clubs, then call the four of diamonds. But in placing the four of diamonds on the bottom of the pack, be sure to get it under the seven of clubs so as not to upset the order of arrangement. The performer will now have the seven of clubs on the bottom, so will instantly know that the ten of spades is the next card to be called.

In performing this trick I generally ask three or four members of the audience to each select a number of cards—all in bunches—from the top of the portion of cards held in the left hand.

It is well to ask those who have selected cards to mix them before starting to call out their names, as this disarranges the order of the cards they hold, otherwise they might note that the cards in their possession were called in the order they held them.

TO TELL THE EXACT POSITION IN THE PACK OF ANY CARD NAMED BY THE AUDIENCE.

The following explanation will require a little study, but if the rules are followed just as stated below, the student will soon comprehend the idea I intend to present, and I dare say will be greatly pleased with the result. In my mind it is the key to the greatest combination of card tricks in existence.

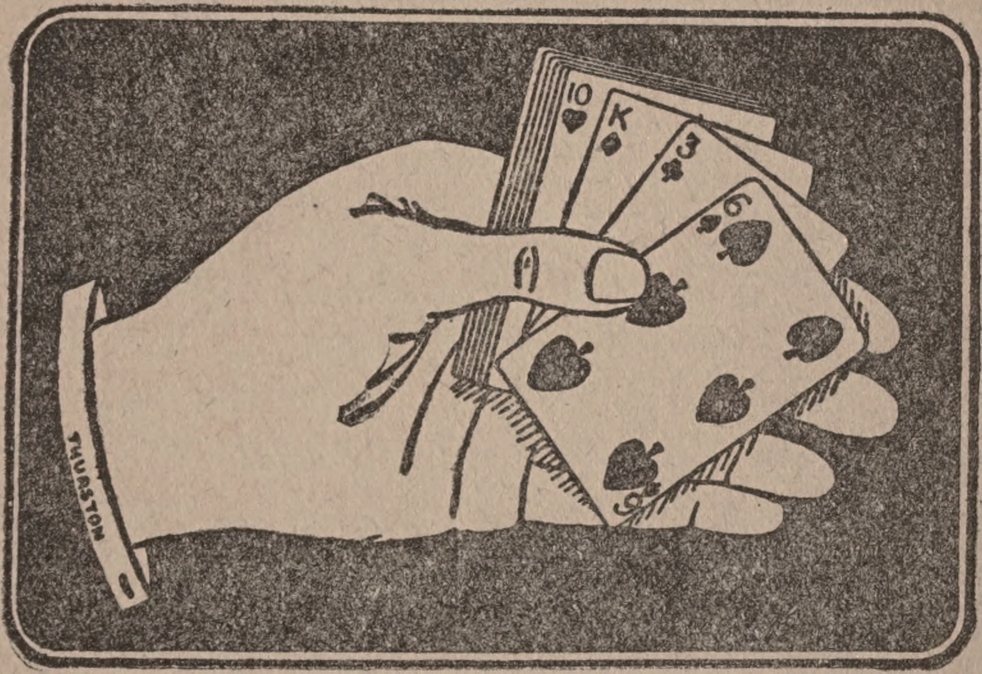


FIG. 31.

To begin with, the card is named by the audience, the artiste so holding the pack as to see at a glance, and note the last four cards, as seen in Fig. 31. These last four cards are: Ten of hearts, king of diamonds, three of clubs, and six of spades.

Say the card named is the three of spades. Now, according to table No. 1, you subtract the given card (three of spades) from the first card of the suit (six of spades), which leaves three. Next multiply by four—twelve; therefore, the three of spades is the twelfth card from the top. Now cut the cards as near as possible to what you think is twelve. Should you cut at the eleventh card—which would be the king of clubs—you immediately know the card following a club is a spade, and if you cut at the king of clubs, the next card is three spots higher—the three of spades—so you open at the next card. Or, should you cut the pack at the thirteenth card, which in this case would be the six of hearts, you know a heart is preceded by a spade, and if you have the six of hearts, the card before it is the three of spades.

TABLE NO. 1.

The following table should be thoroughly learned and memorized.

We will suppose the performer has effected the change of packs and is ready to find any given card in the pack, therefore he proceeds as follows:

> Subtract the given card from first card of suit from the bottom of pack. Now multiply it by four, and deduct the number of cards following the first card of suit.

We will refer again to Fig. 31.

Say the given card is the five of hearts, subtract five from first card of suit (which is ten of hearts) —five.

Now multiply by four—twenty, less the number of cards before the first card of suit from the bottom, which is three, which, deducted from twenty, leaves seventeen. Therefore, the five of hearts is the seventeenth card from the top.

TABLE NO. 2.

> If the card named is higher than the first card of suit from the bottom, subtract the given card from thirteen.
>
> Now add the number of first card of suit, then multiply by four, less the number of cards following the first card of suit, and you will have the exact number of the given card from the top of the pack.

In Fig. 31 the last four cards are the ten of hearts, king of diamonds, three of clubs, and six of spades.

We will say the five of clubs is named, the three of clubs being the first card of suit.

As it is impossible to subtract five from three, you deduct it from thirteen (as explained in table No. 2), which leaves eight. Now add the number of first card of suit, which is three—eleven; multiply by four—forty-four, less the number of cards following the first card of suit (which is one)—forty-three. You will upon examination now find that the forty-third card is the five of clubs.

With a little careful practice the student will soon become familiar with the arrangement, and that which now appears somewhat difficult will become very simple and easy.

I can, within the space of three seconds, cut the pack to any given card.

MIND OVER MIND, OR THE MARVELLOUS WILL POWER.

A spectator draws three cards from the pack, not forced, and without looking at them, or the performer touching them, places them in his breast pocket, from which he has previously removed the contents. The performer now calls out the name of a card, and requests the spectator to hand him one of the three cards from his pocket. Upon this being done, the card is found to correspond with the one previously named by the performer. This is repeated with the other two cards.

This is a vast improvement on the old method of performing a very similar trick, and is highly commended.

The performer asks a spectator to select three cards (making sure that the three cards are selected in a bunch). He then cuts the cards as usual, bringing the card just above the three chosen to the bottom.

The three cards chosen must now be placed in the pocket with the faces toward the person, which is the natural way of doing it. The performer now notes the bottom card of the pack, which enables him to know the names of the chosen cards. Suppose the bottom card was the five of hearts, the first of the three cards would be the eight of diamonds. Therefore, the performer asks the gentleman to place his hand, as quickly as possible, into his pocket and hand him the eight of diamonds, which nine times out of ten will be correct, for this reason: In the act of the spectator placing his left hand in his right inside breast-pocket, owing to it being done quickly, he will seldom, if ever, place more than his four fingers in the pocket, the thumb remaining on the outside. For this reason the only card possible for him to take from the pocket in this condition is the top one, which is the eight of diamonds. If the reader will try this experiment with himself, he will readily catch the idea.

After the first card is produced, the performer calls for the next, which is the jack of clubs, and as there is but one remaining card there can be no mistake, as the performer asks for the ace of spades.

I find this trick always has a great effect on the audience, and causes a considerable amount of excitement and interest.

TO CAUSE A CARD SELECTED BY A SPECTATOR TO BE NAMED BY THE AUDIENCE.

A card is selected by a spectator and laid on the table without its face being seen. The performer now states that it is impossible for any one to know the name of the card, but that he will cause the audience themselves to name it.

The *modus operandi* employed for this experiment is not absolutely new, but fits in well with the series of tricks in my system, and I, therefore, include it.

Supposing the card selected was the eight of hearts, the performer secretly ascertains its name in the same manner as explained on page 53, and forthwith addresses the audience as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen, there are four suits in the pack: hearts, spades, diamonds, and clubs. I shall ask some gentleman to name either two of them. Thank you, sir. The gentleman says hearts and spades, therefore it must be a heart or a spade. Now, will some one kindly name one of these. A spade! Thank you, sir; that leaves a heart, therefore it must be a heart."

To explain the above. The artiste knows, in the first place, that the card is a heart, and he interprets the answers from the audience to suit his own purpose, in the following manner: Had the audience said diamonds and clubs in place of spades and hearts, the performer would have said: "Very well, sir; that leaves hearts and spades." Now, with regard to the heart and the spade, had the audience said hearts instead of spades, the reply would have been: "Very well; it must be a heart."

Example: There are two cards left—hearts and spades. The performer wants the audience to name hearts. Suppose the audience names spades, the reply is: "Very well; that leaves a heart."

Should they have named a heart, the reply is: "Thank you; we will make it a heart," and thus the performer practically forces the card on the audience.

Now, to continue the trick and cause the exact name of the card to be called, which is carried out on the same principle, the performer continues: "The suit is a heart, there are thirteen cards in a suit, and it must be one of the thirteen. We will divide the thirteen into odd and even numbers. Will some one kindly say either odd or even? Odd! Thank you; that leaves even. The even numbers are two, four, six, eight, ten, queen. We will divide them into two parts, above or below seven. Will some one kindly name above or below seven? Above seven! Thank you, sir. It, therefore, must be either the eight, ten, or queen. Will some gentleman kindly name two of these three? Eight and queen! Thank you. Now, will some one select either the eight or the queen? Queen! Thank you. That leaves the eight of hearts. Will the gentleman kindly turn up this card?"

A suggestion as to the tone of voice in naming these cards will be of great advantage. For instance, suppose the queen and eight are left, the performer, wishing the audience to name the eight, says: "Will some one name the eight or the queen?" with a strong accent on the eight, and nine times out of ten, if the words are properly spoken, the desired card will be selected.

A NEW MIND-READING FEAT WITH CARDS.

I wish to tender my sincere thanks to my friend, Mrs. Hartley Milburn, of London, for the idea of this splendid trick.

One or more cards should be selected by a spectator, and the pack laid on the table.

A lady or gentleman sitting on the opposite side of the room (without even as much as a look from the performer) immediately informs the drawer the number and the names of the cards chosen.

This trick, which can, if desired, be presented as an exhibition of genuine mind-reading, will create a profound sensation.

The medium, or second party, to this experiment must be thoroughly acquainted with the order in which the pack is arranged, and should be seated on one side of the performer.

After the card or cards have been selected, the pack is cut, and the card that was above those selected brought to the bottom. In the act of laying the cards on the table, the bottom card is momentarily exposed to the view of the assistant, thus enabling him or her to name the selected card, this, of course, being easily accomplished when one thoroughly understands the arrangement of the pack as set out on page 40.

With a judicious addition of one of the false shuffles described in this present chapter, two clever people can perform tricks on the above principle that not so many years ago would have caused them to meet the fate of a sorcerer.

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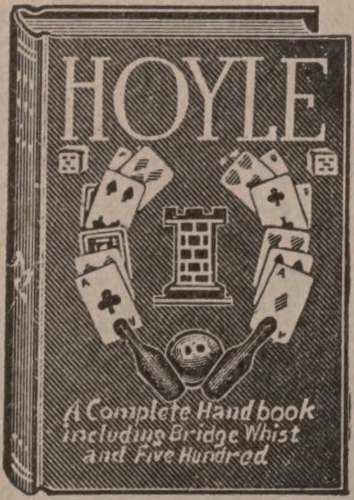
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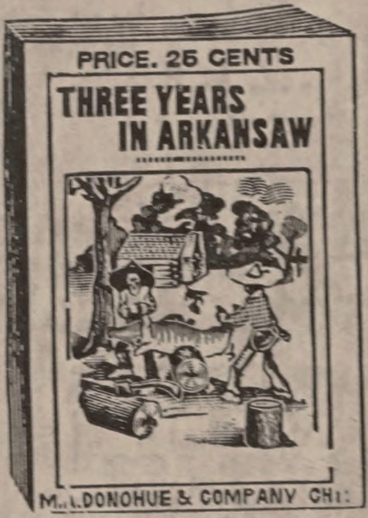

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